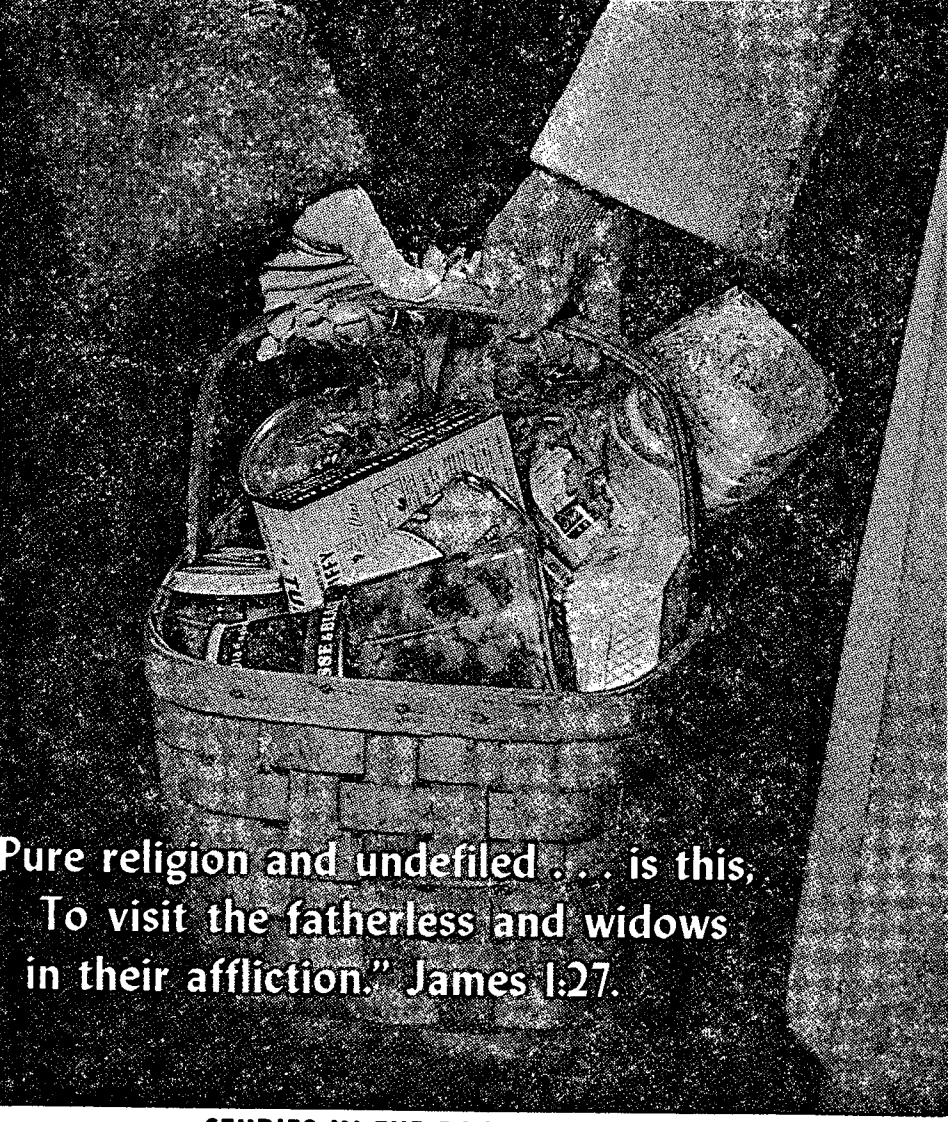

Pure religion and undefiled . . . is this,
To visit the fatherless and widows
in their affliction." James 1:27.

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JAMES

ROBERTS

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON Quarterly

Senior Division, No. 293, Third Quarter, 1968

THE BLESSING OF DAILY STUDY

"The beauty and riches of the Word have a transforming influence on mind and character."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 132.

"There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. . . . If God's Word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times."—*Steps to Christ,* page 90.

My Daily Lesson Study Pledge

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

Name _____

Lesson Titles for the Quarter

1. Trials and Character Development
2. The Problem of Temptation
3. The Practical Character of Christian Experience
4. The Sin of Partiality
5. Faith and Works
6. Teachers of Present Truth—Wise and Unwise
7. Use and Abuse of the Talent of Speech
8. True and False Wisdom Contrasted
9. The Carnal Mind and the Spiritual Mind
10. The Folly of Exalting Self
11. Warning Against Improper Acquisition and Use of Wealth
12. Patient Endurance and the Coming of Christ
13. Closing Admonitions

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Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JAMES

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

"*Authorship*. There is insufficient evidence in the epistle of James to warrant any definite conclusion as to the identity of its author. The NT has many references to men by the name of James. This name was very common among the Jews. . . .

"It is reasonable to suppose that the author of the epistle of James is one of the persons by that name already mentioned in the Scripture record, rather than another James, entirely different from any otherwise known. The tone of the introduction in ch. 1:1 implies that the writer speaks as one well known to those whom he addresses, and that he speaks with recognized authority.

"Although according to the Gospel narratives all the Twelve were closely associated with the Lord, James, the son of Zebedee, was the more prominent of the two apostles by that name. Only a very few writers have ever attributed the epistle to him. But even this possibility seems ruled out by the early date of his death (A.D. 44)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, pp. 497, 498.

Ellen G. White refers to "James the apostle" (*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, p. 91), as the one who wrote the book. It is not clear from the Volume 9 statement or from similar statements (see *Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 248, 384; *Spiritual Gifts,* Vol. 2, p. 143; *Testimonies,* Vol. 5, p. 639; *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 936) whether "James the apostle" refers to James the brother of John (Matthew 10:2) or "James the son of Alphaeus" (Matthew 10:3), who were numbered among the twelve apostles, or to James the brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55), who presided over the first church council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13), and who was a recognized leader of the early church. In any case, the author was prominent, and the believers accepted his epistle as an inspired communication from the Lord.

"There is no certain method of determining the date of the epistle. . . .

"This epistle is one of practical Christianity, showing what results or works a genuine, living faith will produce in the life of a disciple."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 500.

Lesson 1, for July 6, 1968

Trials and Character Development

MEMORY VERSE: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

STUDY HELPS: "The Ministry of Healing," pages 469-482; "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 328-365; "Selected Messages," Bk. 1, pp. 336-339; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To discover how one who is preparing to meet Jesus in peace at His coming can relate to trials in such a way that these experiences will contribute to the development of character.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Ministry of Trials

1. To be met with joy. James 1:2-4; Matt. 5:10-12; 1 Peter 4:12, 13.
2. Faith tested by trials. James 1:3; 1 Peter 1:7.
3. Trials produce patient endurance. James 1:3 (last part); Rom. 5:3.
4. Patient endurance, a prominent characteristic of God's people. Rev. 14:12.
5. Trials cheerfully endured perfect character. James 1:4.

II. Wisdom in Meeting Trials

6. God gives wisdom to meet trials. James 1:5; Prov. 3:5, 6.
7. Must ask for wisdom. James 1:5 (first part); Matt. 7:7, 8.
8. Must believe God's promises. James 1:6 (first part); Mark 11:24.
9. Hesitation and doubt nullify prayer for wisdom. James 1:6 (last part), 7.
10. Doubting reveals a divided heart. James 1:8.

III. Trials Bring Humility and Steadfastness

11. Trial exalts the poor. James 1:9; Matt. 5:3.
12. Trial humbles the wealthy. James 1:10, 11.
13. The reward for steadfastness under trial, eternal life. James 1:12; Rev. 2:10; Matt. 24:13.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." 1 Cor. 3:9. Be sure to read the General Introduction.

"This figure represents human character, which is to be wrought upon, point by point. Each day God works with His building, stroke upon stroke, to perfect the structure, that it may become a holy temple for Him. Man is to cooperate with God. Each worker is to become just what God designs him to be, building his life with pure, noble deeds, that in the end his character may be a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by God and man." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, p. 173.

The Ministry of Trials

1. How is one who believes in Christ admonished to meet the trials of life? Why? James 1:2-4; Matt. 5: 10-12; 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

NOTE.—The Greek word *peirasmos,* translated "temptations" in James 1:2, basically means a "test" applied with the purpose of determining the quality and thus the value of an object, or the character of a person. In the New Testament it is also used of temptation to sin, in the sense of a test applied by Satan, as a result of which character is revealed. God puts a man to the test in order to strengthen faith; Satan, as he did in the case of Job and of Christ in the wilderness, puts him to the test in the hope of destroying faith. Like *peirasmos,* the English word *temptation* was also formerly used in the sense of testing as well as temptation to sin.

The New English Bible translates James 1:2-4 as follows: "My brothers, whenever you have to face trials of many kinds, count yourselves supremely happy, in the knowledge that such testing of your faith breeds fortitude, and if you give fortitude full play you will go on to complete a balanced character that will fall short in nothing."

"All trials that are received as educators will produce joy. The whole religious life will be uplifting, elevating, ennobling, fragrant with good words and works. The enemy is well pleased to have souls depressed, downcast, mourning and groaning; he wants just such impressions made as to the effect of our faith. But God designs that the mind shall take no low level. He desires every soul to triumph in the keeping power of the Redeemer."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, pp. 365, 366.

2. What do trials accomplish for faith? James 1:3; 1 Peter 1:7.

NOTE.—Trials provide the Christian with an opportunity to exercise, and thus to strengthen, faith. James speaks of a victorious faith that has successfully faced the varied trials of life, and each trial makes the faith of the victorious Christian stronger than it was before.

3. What valuable characteristic is developed in the life of the believer who by faith triumphs over trials? James 1:3 (last part); Rom. 5:3.

NOTE.—The word translated "patience" in James 1:3 and Revelation 14:12 (see question 4) means "steadfast endurance."

"Many who sincerely consecrate their lives to God's service are surprised and disappointed to find themselves, as never before, confronted by obstacles and beset by trials and perplexities. They pray for Christlikeness of character, for a fitness for the Lord's work, and they are placed in circumstances that seem to call forth all the evil of their nature. . . . Like Israel of old they question, 'If God is leading us, why do all these things come upon us?'

"It is because God is leading them that these things come upon them. Trials and obstacles are the Lord's chosen methods of discipline and His appointed conditions of success."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pages 470, 471.

4. How is steadfast endurance or "patience" related to the acceptance of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-11? Rev. 14:12.

NOTE.—Those who accept and adhere to the three angels' messages develop the quality of patient endurance that will enable them to remain true to God through earth's last great crisis.

"Severe trial endured by the grace of God develops patience, vigilance, fortitude, and a deep and abiding trust in God. It is the triumph of the Christian faith that it enables its follower to suffer and be strong; to submit, and thus to conquer; to be killed all the day long, and yet to live; to bear the cross, and thus to win the crown of glory."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 468.

5. What is the final stage in the development of character under the impact of trials cheerfully borne? James 1:4.

NOTE.—"The Lord wants His people to stand far above selfish interest. He wants them to conquer the temptations they meet. He calls for the communion of saints. He desires His workers to stand under His supervision. He will plane and polish the material for His temple, preparing each piece to fit closely to the other, that the building may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 7, p. 131.

Wisdom in Meeting Trials

6. When trials press upon the believer, where will he find the wisdom he needs to meet them triumphantly? James 1:5; Prov. 3:5, 6.

NOTE.—"Lean to your own understanding, dear brethren, as you make your way through the world, and you will reap sorrow and disappointment. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and He will guide your steps in wisdom, and your interests will be safe for this world and for the next."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 427.

7. What must the believer do in order to obtain wisdom? James 1:5 (first part); Matt. 7:7, 8.

NOTE.—"Human help is feeble. But we may unite in seeking help and favor from Him who has said, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' . . . Then let us come to God, pleading for the guidance of His Holy Spirit. . . . Let our requests be mingled with praise and thanksgiving."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 485.

8. What condition is attached to the asking for wisdom? James 1:6 (first part); Mark 11:24.

NOTE.—"This petition for wisdom is not to be a meaningless prayer, out of mind as soon as finished. It is a prayer that expresses the strong, earnest desire of the heart, arising from a conscious lack of wisdom to determine the will of God.

"After the prayer is made, if the answer is not realized immediately, do not weary of waiting and become unstable. Waver not. Cling to the promise. . . . Watch and pray. Be steadfast and the prayer will be answered; for is it not God who has promised? . . . You are plainly told that if you waver you need not think that you shall receive anything of the Lord. A caution is here given not to become weary, but to rest firmly upon the promise. If you ask, He will give you liberally and upbraid not."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 2, p. 131.

9. How will persistent doubt and hesitancy affect the prayer for wisdom? James 1:6 (last part), 7.

NOTE.—"His promise is only to those who are willing to follow the Lord wholly. God does not force the will of any; hence He cannot lead those who are too proud to be taught, who are bent upon having their own way. Of the double-minded man —he who seeks to follow his own will, while professing to do the will of God—it is written, 'Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.' James 1:7."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 384.

10. What does a doubting attitude toward God's promises reveal concerning a man? James 1:8. Compare Matt. 6:24.

NOTE.—A double-minded man is not sure whether God means what He has promised and can be trusted to do it.

"The exhortation is given, 'Purify your hearts, ye double-minded.' While professing to be Christians, many have the mold of the world upon them, and their affections are not set upon God. They are double-minded, making an attempt to serve God and mammon at the same time; but the world's Redeemer has declared, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon' (Matt. 6:24). By trying to serve two masters, they are unstable in all their ways, and cannot be depended upon. To all appearances they are serving God, while at the same time in heart they are yielding to the temptation of Satan and cherishing sin. They may speak words that are smoother than oil, yet their hearts are full of deception and deceit in all their practices. Professing to be righteous, yet they have a heart that is desperately wicked.

"Of what profit is it to say pleasant things, to deplore the work of Satan, and yet at the same time to enter into the fulfillment of all his devices? This is being double-minded."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 938.

Trials Bring Humility and Steadfastness

11. In what way may the poor man rejoice when he experiences trials? James 1:9; Matt. 5:3.

NOTE.—"*Of low degree.* . . . 'In humble circumstances,' and thus, of lowly rank or employment, in a condition of dependence or of poverty. This phrase is in contrast with 'the rich' in v. 10. This condition of economic difficulty is a trial many are called upon to face. . . . These circumstances were a trial in the sense that they tested his 'faith' in God and his allegiance to God. 'The brother of low degree' is ever tempted to be jealous and resentful toward his 'rich' brother, and the 'rich' brother to think himself superior to the 'brother of low degree' and to take advantage of him.

"*Rejoice.* Literally, 'glory,' 'boast.' . . . With the 'wisdom' (v. 5) that God gives us we can view life in proper perspective. We can see the things of time in the light of eternity. . . . The progress a man makes spiritually is vastly more important than the progress he makes economically. The 'glorying' consists in the realization that despite the lack of earthly possessions, God compensates the humble Christian far beyond the joys that the fleeting possessions of earth give."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 1:9.

12. In what may the man of means rejoice? James 1:10, 11. Compare Heb. 11:24-26.

NOTE.—"James is emphasizing in vs. 9 and 10 the fact that regardless of material circumstances the Christian brother, whether rich or poor, will find his most rewarding cause for rejoicing in the privileges of the Christian faith."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 1:10.

13. What reward is offered the believer who endures the trials of life? James 1:12; Rev. 2:10; Matt. 24:13.

Questions for Meditation

1. How do I react to the trials of everyday life?
2. Do I doubt God's Word, or do I believe that He means what He says and expects me to act in harmony with His revealed will?
3. How often do I ask God for wisdom to meet specific problems in Christian living?

Lesson 2, for July 13, 1968

The Problem of Temptation

MEMORY VERSE: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23.

STUDY HELPS: "Steps to Christ," chapters "Faith and Acceptance," and "The Test of Discipleship"; Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," pages 91-95, 116-119 (1943 ed., pp. 136-140, 170-173); "Testimonies," Vol. 4, pp. 609-627.

STUDY AIM: To become alert to the subtle nature of the process whereby Satan would, if possible, deceive "the very elect," and to erect safeguards against his wiles.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Source and Nature of Temptation

1. The error of attributing trials and temptations to God. James 1:13 (first part).
2. God has no dealings with evil. James 1:13 (last part).
3. How to avoid temptation. Matt. 26:41; Luke 22:40; 1 Cor. 10:13.
4. Perverted desires, the root of temptation. James 1:14; Jer. 17:9.
5. Temptation defined. James 1:14.
6. The danger of harboring wrong desires. James 1:15.
7. A warning against following one's natural inclinations. James 1:16.

II. The Source of All Good Things

8. All good things come from God. James 1:17 (first part); Matt. 7:11.
9. God is constant and invariable. James 1:17 (last part).
10. How to resist temptation and demonstrate the power of truth. James 1:18; Matt. 4:4.
11. Caution against responding to promptings of natural heart. James 1:19, 20.
12. Our safeguard against temptation. James 1:21.

THE LESSON

Introduction

It is not possible for men to appreciate as fully as they should the greatness of the love of God and their need for continual communion with the Saviour, unless they realize the true nature and origin of temptation and its heaven-appointed remedy.

The Source and Nature of Temptation

1. What warning is given concerning trials and temptations? James 1:13 (first part).

NOTE.—"Temptation is enticement to sin, and this does not proceed from God. . . .

"God in His great love is seeking to develop in us the precious graces of His Spirit. He permits us to encounter obstacles, persecution, and hardships, not as a curse, but as the greatest blessing of our lives. Every temptation resisted, every trial bravely borne, gives us a new experience and advances us in the work of character building. The soul that through divine power resists temptation reveals to the world and to the heavenly universe the efficiency of the grace of Christ."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* pages 116, 117.

2. Why is it illogical to suggest that trials and temptations come from God? James 1:13 (last part). Compare Hab. 1:13 (first part).

NOTE.—Phillips translates James 1:13 thus: "For God has no dealings with evil." The Greek word rendered "cannot be tempted" implies a lack of experience with temptation, and thus that God has not known evil by experience. He was, as the writer of Hebrews points out, "in all points tempted like as we are"; thus He can "be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Heb. 4:15. But this experience with temptation is not what James refers to. Rather, his point, as the New English Bible translates it, is that God "is untouched by evil"; therefore it is unreasonable to attribute temptation to Him.

"James shows that it is inconceivable that God would tempt men to sin. He cannot be tempted with the desire to tempt men to do evil."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 1:13.

As the context clearly indicates, temptation to sin is here under consideration. (See verses 13-15.)

3. What can we do to avoid temptation? What will God then do for us? Matt. 26:41; 1 Cor. 10:13.

NOTE.—"We should pray that God will not permit us to be brought where we shall be drawn away by the desires of our own evil hearts. In offering the prayer that Christ has given, we surrender ourselves to the guidance of God, asking Him to lead us in safe paths. . . .

"If we commit ourselves to God we have the assurance, He 'will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' 1 Cor. 10:13."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* pages 117, 118.

4. Why do Satan's temptations so often appeal to the human heart? James 1:14; Jer. 17:9.

NOTE.—"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. He is turned away from the course of virtue and real good by following his own inclinations. If the youth possessed moral integrity, the strongest temptations might be presented in vain. It is Satan's act to tempt you, but your own act to yield. It is not in the power of all the host of Satan to force the tempted to transgress. There is no excuse for sin."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, p. 623.

5. How does James define temptation? James 1:14.

"What is temptation?—It is the means by which those who claim to be the children of God are tested and tried. . . . God permits temptation to come to His people today, that they may realize that He is their helper. If they draw nigh to Him when they are tempted, He strengthens them to meet the temptation. But if they yield to the enemy, neglecting to place themselves close to their Almighty Helper, they are overcome. They separate themselves from God. They do not give evidence that they walk in God's way."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 1, p. 1094.

6. What is the result of cherishing the desires of the natural heart? James 1:15.

NOTE.—"When Satan is permitted to control the mind that will not be ruled by Jehovah, he will lead it according to his will, until the man who is thus in his power becomes an efficient agent to carry out his designs."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 2, p. 1019.

"If we would not commit sin, we must shun its very beginnings. Every emotion and desire must be held in subjection to reason and conscience. Every unholy thought must be instantly repelled. To your closet, followers of Christ. Pray in faith and with all the heart. Satan is watching to ensnare your feet. You must have help from above if you would escape his devices."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 5, p. 177.

"All should guard the senses, lest Satan gain victory over them; for these are the avenues to the soul."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, p. 507.

7. In view of the enticing nature of temptation, what caution does James utter with respect to following one's natural inclinations? James 1:16.

NOTE.—"Satan's studied purpose is to blind the eyes of man in regard to God's part in the history of sin. Most of this world's philosophies and religions are built on false concepts by which Satan seeks to distort the character of God. James would not have Christians believe that God is responsible for sin and the evils that sin produces."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 1:16.

The Source of All Good Things

8. To what gracious attitude on God's part does James point as conclusive evidence that God does not tempt men? James 1:17 (first part); Matt. 7:11.

NOTE.—Instead of enticing men to do evil, God is the source of everything that is good.

9. What assurance does James give of the constancy of God? James 1:17 (last part). Compare Ps. 89:34; Heb. 13:8.

NOTE.—"The rainbow about the throne is an assurance that God is true; that in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We have sinned against Him and are undeserving of His favor; yet He Himself has put into our lips that most wonderful of pleas: 'Do not abhor us, for Thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory: remember, break not Thy covenant with us.' Jer. 14:21. He has pledged Himself to give heed to our cry when we come to Him confessing our unworthiness and sin. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word to us."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, p. 23.

10. What is the secret of being able to resist temptation? James 1:18; Matt. 4:4.

NOTE.—"Let them [the youth] take the Word of truth as the man of their counsel, and become skillful in the use of 'the sword of the Spirit.' Satan is a wise general; but the humble, devoted soldier of Jesus Christ may overcome him."—*My Life Today,* page 315.

11. In view of what God has done for him, what should the Christian do? James 1:19, 20.

NOTE.—"The mind should be elevated to dwell upon eternal scenes, heaven, its treasures, its glories, and should take sweet and holy satisfaction in the truths of the Bible. It should love to feed upon the precious promises that God's Word affords, draw comfort from them, and be lifted above trifles to weighty, eternal things."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 1, p. 164.

12. With what safeguard against temptation has God provided us? James 1:21. Compare Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Heb. 4:12.

NOTE.—" 'The prince of this world cometh,' said Jesus, 'and hath nothing in Me.' John 14:30. There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan's sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. . . . So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.

"And how this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. By what means did He overcome in the conflict with Satan? By the Word of God. . . . Every promise in God's Word is ours. 'By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God' are we to live. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the Word. All its strength is yours. 'Thy Word,' says the psalmist, 'have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.' 'By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.' "—*The Desire of Ages*, page 123.

Questions for Meditation

1. Am I alert to my need for constant communication with God in order to avoid being lured into temptation?

2. Do I recognize that my heart is by nature sinful and wicked?

3. Has the Word of God become my defense against all the attacks of the enemy?

Lesson 3, for July 20, 1968

The Practical Character of Christian Experience

MEMORY VERSE: "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21.

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies," Vol. 4, pp. 56-60; "Fundamentals of Christian Education," pages 456-466; "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 120-131.

STUDY AIM: To gain a better understanding of what constitutes practical religion.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Danger of a Passive Attitude

1. Admonition to be active Christians. James 1:22 (first part).
2. Result of failure to be active. James 1:22 (last part).
3. The danger illustrated. Matt. 7: 21-27.

II. The Forgetfulness of the Passive Hearer

4. A man and a mirror. James 1:23.
5. Result of a passive attitude. James 1:24.

III. The Relation Between Law and Liberty

6. "The law" reveals sin. Rom. 3:20-22.
7. The desire for freedom from sin. Rom. 7:23, 24.
8. How freedom from sin is obtained. John 8:32, 34.
9. Continual obedience brings continual blessing. James 1:25.

IV. Superficial Versus Genuine Religion

10. Mere knowledge of truth not enough. James 1:26; Matt. 12:34-37.
11. Knowledge must be accompanied by love. 2 Thess. 2:10.
12. Genuine religion is practical. James 1:27; Isa. 58:6, 7, 10; Matt. 25:34-40.
13. Genuine religion leads to avoidance of all that stains or defiles. James 1:27 (last part).

THE LESSON

Introduction

Christianity is not a creed to be learned; it is a life to be lived. Jesus "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." Acts 10:38. This is the privilege and responsibility of all who follow Him.

"He who called the fishermen of Galilee is still calling men to His service. And He is just as willing to manifest His power through us as through the first disciples. However imperfect and sinful we may be, the Lord holds out to us the offer of partnership with Himself, of apprenticeship to Christ. He invites us to come under the divine instruction, that, uniting with Christ, we may work the works of God."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 297.

The Danger of a Passive Attitude

1. What attitude are believers counseled to take toward God's revealed will? What are they warned against? James 1:22 (first part).

NOTE.—"The reason why our people have not more power is that they profess the truth, but do not practice it. They have but little faith and trust in God. . . . The Lord claims the strength of brain, bone, and muscle; but it is too often withheld from Him and given to the world. The service of God is made a secondary matter, while worldly interests receive prompt attention. . . . If the mind were stayed upon God and the truth exerted a sanctifying influence upon the heart, self would be hid in Christ. If we realized the importance of the truth which we profess to believe, we should feel that we have a sacred mission to fulfill, a responsibility involving eternal results. All temporal interests would yield to this."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, pp. 613, 614.

2. What is the result of neglecting the admonition to be active Christians? James 1:22, last part. Compare Rev. 3:17.

NOTE.—"The Laodicean message applies to all who profess to keep the law of God, and yet are not doers of it. We are not to be selfish in anything. Every phase of the Christian life is to be a representation of the life of Christ. If it is not, we shall hear the terrible words, 'I know you not.' "—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 962.

3. How did Jesus illustrate the danger of hearing but not doing? Matt. 7:21-27. Compare Rom. 2:13; 1 John 3:7.

The Forgetfulness of the Passive Hearer

4. To what is the passive hearer compared? James 1:23.

NOTE.—"The law is God's great moral looking glass. He is to compare his words, his spirit, his actions, with the Word of God."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 125.

5. What is the result of a passive attitude toward truth? James 1:24.

NOTE.—"He did not receive the impression made upon his mind when comparing his course of action with the great moral looking glass. He did not see his defects of character. He did not reform, and forgetting all about the impression made, he went not God's way, but his way, continuing to be unreformed."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education,* page 460.

The Relation Between Law and Liberty

6. What is the function of God's law in relation to sin? Rom. 3:20-22.

NOTE.—As used by Bible writers, the term "law" usually includes all of God's revealed will, especially as set forth in the writings of Moses, the first five books of the Old Testament. Mere outward compliance with God's requirements, says Paul, is worthless; that would be legalism. Through

"the law" a man comes to a "knowledge of sin," but he can attain to justification only through "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of [in] Jesus Christ," to which "the law and the prophets" bear witness.

7. What urgent desire is produced in man by the realization that he is the slave of sin? Rom. 7:23, 24.

NOTE.—"Man was originally endowed with noble powers and a well-balanced mind. . . . But through disobedience, his powers were perverted, and selfishness took the place of love. His nature became so weakened through transgression that it was impossible for him, in his own strength, to resist the power of evil. He was made captive by Satan, and would have remained so forever had not God specially interposed. . . .

"It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. . . . 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' . . . Rom. 8:7. Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul."—*Steps to Christ,* pp. 17, 18.

8. What does a knowledge of and love for truth bring to the sincere believer? John 8:32, 34. Compare Rom. 8:1, 2.

9. How does James describe the man who does what he finds written in "the perfect law of liberty"? James 1:25. Compare John 13:17.

NOTE.—"Those who have genuine love for God will manifest an earnest desire to know His will and to do it. . . . The child who loves his parents will show that love by willing obedience; but the selfish, ungrateful child seeks to do as little as possible for his parents, while he at the same time desires to enjoy all the privileges granted to the obedient and faithful. The same difference is seen among those who profess to be children of God. Many who know that they are the objects of His love and care, and who desire to receive His blessing, take no delight in doing His will. They regard God's claims upon them as an unpleasant restraint, His commandments as a grievous yoke. But He who is truly seeking for holiness of heart and life delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he falls so far short of meeting its requirements."—*The Sanctified Life,* page 81.

Superficial Versus Genuine Religion

10. How is it possible to know whether a man's religion is genuine—whether he has been transformed by the grace of God? James 1:26; Matt. 12:34-37.

11. What else is necessary besides the knowledge of the truth? 2 Thess. 2:10. Compare John 14:6.

NOTE.—Jesus said, "I am . . . the truth." He who does not love truth, therefore, rejects Jesus, and by so doing places himself in danger of eternal death.

12. What part do works of mercy and love have in religion? James 1:27; Isa. 58:6, 7, 10; Matt. 25:34-40.

NOTE.—"In placing among them the helpless and the poor, to be dependent upon their care, Christ tests His professed followers. By our love and service for His needy children we prove the genuineness of our love for Him. To neglect them is to declare ourselves false disciples, strangers to Christ and His love."—*The Ministry of Healing,* page 205.

"Practical religion breathes its fragrance everywhere. It is a savor of life unto life." —Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 3, p. 1157.

13. What is said of the character of those who practice pure religion? James 1:27 (last part). Compare Rev. 14:4, 5.

NOTE.—"Jesus is coming; and will He find a people conformed to the world? and will He acknowledge these as His people that He has purified unto Himself? Oh, no. None but the pure and holy will He acknowledge as His. Those who have been purified and made white through suffering, and have kept themselves separate, unspotted from the world, He will own as His."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 1, p. 133.

Questions for Meditation

1. Am I an active or a passive Christian?
2. Is my study of the Bible as thorough as it should be to enable me to be a faithful witness for Christ?
3. Have I obtained freedom from the slavery of sin?

Lesson 4, for July 27, 1968

The Sin of Partiality

MEMORY VERSE: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." 1 Cor. 1:26, 27.

STUDY HELPS: "Counsels on Health," pages 228-230; "Testimonies," Vol. 2, pp. 156-161; "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 376-389; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To develop the principle that a man in whose heart the love of Jesus reigns will regard all men as of equal worth in God's sight—that he will manifest the same sympathetic interest in the needy poor as in the needy rich.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Partiality Incompatible With Faith in Jesus

1. Admonition to refrain from partiality. James 2:1.
2. Quality of justice not determined by poverty or wealth. Lev. 19:15.
3. God provides for all alike. Matt. 5:45.

II. The Folly of Class Distinction

4. Men not to be evaluated by outward appearance. James 2:2, 3.
5. Such evaluation the result of un-Christlike thinking. James 2:4.
6. God's estimate of the poor. James 2:5.
7. Man's mistaken estimate of the poor. James 2:6 (first part).
8. The behavior of the rich toward the poor in the early church. James 2:6 (last part), 7.

III. The "Royal Law" and Partiality

9. The royal law defined. James 2:8.
10. Class distinctions violate Christian principles. James 2:9.

IV. Unselfish Love for God and Man

11. Disregard of any divine requirement makes a man a transgressor. James 2:10, 11.
12. Love for God results in willing obedience. James 2:12.
13. Mercy triumphs over fear of judgment. James 2:13.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The inspired pen counsels us: "Read the second chapter of James. Practice the truth in your daily life and you will know the work that the Lord has given you to do."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 125.

The section of James 2 considered in this lesson emphasizes the truth that God recognizes no artificial distinctions between men, and that His true followers will act with a spirit of sympathetic love toward all men, regardless of their station in life. They will not be influenced by poverty or riches, learning or ignorance, but will look upon all men as candidates for the kingdom of glory.

Partiality Incompatible With Faith in Jesus

1. What does James urge believers not to attempt to unite with the faith of Jesus? James 2:1. Compare Acts 10:34.

NOTE.—In a message directed primarily to workers in the publishing office at Battle Creek, but which states principles applicable in all situations, Sister White wrote: "Those who link their affections and interest to one or two, and favor them to the disadvantage of others, should not retain their position in the office for a day. This unsanctified partiality for special ones who may please the fancy, to the neglect of others who are conscientious and God-fearing, and in His sight of more value, is offensive to God. That which God values we should value. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit He regards of higher value than external beauty, outward adornment, riches, or worldly honor."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, p. 24.

2. With what attitude were those who administered justice in ancient Israel instructed to act? Lev. 19:15. Compare Deut. 1:17.

NOTE.—"To have 'respect to persons' is to 'commit sin' (James 2:9). The artist rightly represents justice as a woman holding a pair of scales in balance, her eyes covered so that she will not be influenced by seeing who or what is before her."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Lev. 19:15.

3. To what aspect of the love of God did Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, draw the attention of His hearers? Matt. 5:45.

NOTE.—"In His life and lessons, Christ has given a perfect exemplification of the unselfish ministry which has its origin in God. God does not live for Himself. By creating the world, and by upholding all things, He is constantly ministering for others. . . . Jesus was given to stand at the head of humanity, that by His example He might teach what it means to minister. . . . He served all, ministered to all. Thus He lived the law of God, and by His example showed how we are to obey it."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 649.

The Folly of Class Distinction

4. How did some early Christians show partiality to men of means? James 2:2, 3.

5. What does partiality based on economic status reveal? James 2:4.

NOTE.—"The apostle calls the partial ones 'judges' because they have expressed their judgment by their conduct. They judged the rich and the poor by un-Christ-like standards. Their judgment in making a distinction between the rich and the poor was based on a false sense of values—the standard usually practiced by the 'world' (see ch. 1:27). To a genuine Christian the soul of the poor man is worth as much as the soul of the rich man, Calvary being the great equalizer."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 2:4.

6. What high destiny awaits the poor who are rich in faith? James 2:5. Compare Matt. 5:3.

NOTE.—"The poor should be treated with as much interest and attention as the rich. The practice of honoring the rich and slighting and neglecting the poor is a crime in the sight of God. Those who are surrounded with all the comforts of life, or who are petted and pampered by the world because they are rich, do not feel the need of sympathy and tender consideration as do persons whose lives have been one long struggle with poverty. The latter have but little in this life to make them happy or cheerful, and they will appreciate sympathy and love."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, p. 551.

7. How have many Christians treated the poor? James 2:6 (first part).

NOTE.—"It was not the purpose of God that poverty should ever leave the world. The ranks of society were never to be equalized; for the diversity of conditions which characterizes our race is one of the means by which God has designed to prove and develop character. Many have urged with great enthusiasm that all men should have an equal share in the temporal blessings of God; but this was not the purpose of the Creator. Christ has said that we shall have the poor always with us. The poor, as well as the rich, are the purchase of His blood; and among His professed followers, in most cases, the former serve Him with singleness of purpose, while the latter are constantly fastening their affections on their earthly treasures, and Christ is forgotten. The cares of this life and the greed for riches eclipse the glory of the eternal world. It would be the greatest misfortune that has ever befallen mankind if all were to be placed upon an equality in worldly possessions."—*Counsels on Health,* page 230.

8. What is said of the behavior of some rich men toward the church and toward the name of God? James 2:6 (last part), 7.

NOTE.—It must be remembered that profession of faith in Jesus brought many perplexing problems to the believers during the first few centuries of the Christian era—as will no doubt be the case in the not far distant future when the line of demarcation is clearly drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. "James is saying that in view of these arrogant practices of 'rich men' (v. 6) the rich visitor does not deserve the fawning partiality granted him when he visits the church. Church members are to show respect for the rich, but no more than the respect and consideration they show the poor."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 2:7.

The "Royal Law" and Partiality

9. What is the chief guiding principle of the "royal law"? James 2:8. Compare Rom. 13:10.

10. How does God regard partiality? James 2:9.

NOTE.—James suggests that those who show respect of persons are "missing the mark"; they lack love that characterizes all true Christians. They fail to realize that "the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 20.

Unselfish Love for God and Man

11. What is the result of disregarding even one point of the law of God? James 2:10, 11.

NOTE.—"From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator, and though he was cast out of heaven he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will be ulti-

mately the same. He that offends 'in one point,' manifests contempt for the whole law; his influence and example are on the side of transgression; he becomes 'guilty of all.' James 2:10."—*The Great Controversy*, page 582.

12. What will be the conduct of those who recognize the principle of true liberty embodied in the law of God? James 2:12. Compare John 14:15; 15:10, 14; 1 John 5:3.

NOTE.—"The only condition upon which the freedom of man is possible is that of becoming one with Christ. 'The truth shall make you free;' and Christ is the truth. Sin can triumph only by enfeebling the mind, and destroying the liberty of the soul. Subjection to God is restoration to one's self,—to the true glory and dignity of man. The divine law, to which we are brought into subjection, is 'the law of liberty.' James 2:12."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 466.

13. How does James conclude his discussion of the sin of partiality? James 2:13. Compare Matt. 25:41-46; Gal. 6:7-10.

Questions for Meditation

1. Am I completely impartial in my dealings with all people?
2. Is my life characterized by wholehearted love for God and self-effacing love for men?
3. Does my concept of the importance of the law of God lead me to perfect compliance with its requirements?

Lesson 5, for August 3, 1968

Faith and Works

MEMORY VERSE: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son." Heb. 11:17.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 145-155; "Steps to Christ," chapters "Growing Up Into Christ" and "The Work and the Life."

STUDY AIM: To clarify the relationship between faith and works.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Subject Introduced

1. The worthlessness of faith by itself. James 2:14 (first part).
2. Such faith lacks saving power. James 2:14 (last part).

II. A Fitting Illustration

3. Words without deeds. James 2:15, 16.
4. Faith that does not lead to action is useless. James 2:17.

III. Faith and Works Go Together

5. Faith demonstrated by accompanying works. James 2:18.
6. The utter futility of belief without action. James 2:19.
7. The barrenness of faith unaccompanied by works. James 2:20.

IV. Abraham's Example

8. Abraham's faith demonstrated. James 2:21.
9. Faith completed by obedience. James 2:22.
10. Righteousness imputed to Abraham. James 2:23; Rom. 4:3.
11. Abraham an example of faith working by love. Gal. 5:6 (last part).
12. Justification accompanied by corresponding works. James 2:24.

V. Faith Without Works Is Dead

13. Rahab's faith-inspired works. James 2:25.
14. Faith without works compared to a corpse. James 2:26.

Introduction

James 2:14-26 consists of a discussion of the relation between faith and works, with emphasis on the fact that faith is worthless unless it is accompanied by corresponding works. Faith divorced from works, says James, is worthless in God's sight.

"There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ. . . . While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works. God saves us under a law, that we must ask if we would receive, seek if we would find, and knock if we would have the door opened unto us."—*Selected Messages,* Bk. 1, p. 377.

"The faith that is unto salvation is not a casual faith, it is not the mere consent of the intellect, it is belief rooted in the heart, that embraces Christ as a personal Saviour, assured that He can save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. To believe that He will save others, but will not save you is not genuine faith; but when the soul lays hold upon Christ as the only hope of salvation, then genuine faith is manifested. This faith leads its possessor to place all the affections of the soul upon Christ; his understanding is under the control of the Holy Spirit, and his character is molded after the divine likeness. His faith is not a dead faith, but a faith that works by love, and leads him to behold the beauty of Christ, and to become assimilated to the divine character." —*Ibid.,* pp. 391, 392.

The Subject Introduced

1. What answer is implied in James's question about faith without works? James 2:14 (first part). Compare Matt. 21:28-31.

NOTE.—Faith without works, a faith that prompts no more than mere lip service, is profitless.

"The testimony of the Word of God is against this ensnaring doctrine of faith without works. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted, it is presumption; for genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures.

"Let none deceive themselves with the belief that they can become holy while willfully violating one of God's requirements. The commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit and separates the soul from God."—*The Great Controversy,* page 472.

2. What further question does James ask about faith without works? James 2:14 (last part).

NOTE.—"The Greek makes clear that James expects a negative answer: 'No, of course not.' Faith that does not find expression in habitual good deeds will never save any man."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 2:14.

A Fitting Illustration

3. What illustration does James give of the worthlessness of faith without works? James 2:15, 16. Compare Isa. 58:5-8.

NOTE.—"If we neglect the cases of the needy and the unfortunate that are brought under our notice, no matter who they may be, we have no assurance of eternal life; for we do not answer the claims that God has upon us. . . . Those who do not open their hearts to the wants and sufferings of humanity will not open their hearts to the claims of God as stated in the first four precepts of the Decalogue. Idols claim the heart and affections, and God is not honored and does not reign supreme."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, p. 524.

4. How is so-called faith that does not inspire corresponding action best described? James 2:17.

NOTE.—"Christ only is the way, the truth, the life; and man can be justified alone through the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Man is justified freely by

God's grace through faith, and not by works, lest any man should boast."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Nov. 11, 1890.

Faith and Works Go Together

5. How is the quality of one's faith revealed? James 2:18.

NOTE.—"To show faith apart from works is an impossible task because faith, being a principle, an attitude of the mind, will always reveal its nature in outward behavior. But one who exhibits an absence of good works thereby also demonstrates a lack of genuine faith."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, on James 2:18.

6. How do evil angels demonstrate the uselessness of belief without corresponding works? James 2:19.

NOTE.—"I saw a very large company professing the name of Christ, but God did not recognize them as His. He had no pleasure in them. Satan seemed to assume a religious character and was very willing that the people should think they were Christians. He was even anxious that they should believe in Jesus, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. Satan and his angels fully believe all this themselves, and tremble. But if this faith does not provoke to good works, and lead those who profess it to imitate the self-denying life of Christ, Satan is not disturbed; for they merely assume the Christian name, while their hearts are still carnal, and he can use them in his service even better than if they made no profession."—*Early Writings*, page 227.

7. What strong appeal does James address to the man who is slow to grasp the true importance of matching faith by works? James 2:20.

Abraham's Example

8. By what was Abraham justified at the time he offered up his son Isaac? James 2:21. Compare Gen. 22: 9-12; Heb. 11:17.

ANSWER: At that time he was justified by his works of obedience in offering Isaac.

NOTE.—"As Abraham engaged in the 'works' preparatory to the offering, he gave full proof of the genuineness of his faith. . . .

"Only Abraham's unswerving confidence in the trustworthiness of God can account for this supreme act of obedience. His faith, as evidenced in his 'works,' received again, as in the first instance of justification (see Gen. 15:6), the declaration of God's approval."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, on James 2:21.

9. What effect did Abraham's obedience have on his faith? James 2:22.

NOTE.—The Greek word here rendered "perfect" implies that works bring faith to its goal, or to completion. The test gave Abraham an opportunity to demonstrate his triumphant faith.

10. Why was Abraham called the "friend of God"? James 2:23; Rom. 4:3.

NOTE.—Abraham's experience indicates that God accepts as friends those who take Him at His word and show their complete trust in Him by living in perfect obedience to all of His revealed will. To all such, God attributes the righteousness of His own Son.

11. For what does God look in those who profess to be followers of Jesus? Gal. 5:6 (last part).

NOTE.—God looks for *faith*, a faith that *works*, a working faith whose motive power is *love*.

"Genuine faith always works by love. When you look to Calvary it is not to quiet your soul in the nonperformance of duty, not to compose yourself to sleep, but to create faith in Jesus, faith that will work, purifying the soul from the slime of selfishness. When we lay hold of Christ by faith, our work has just begun. Every

man has corrupt and sinful habits that must be overcome by vigorous warfare. Every soul is required to fight the fight of faith. If one is a follower of Christ, he cannot be sharp in deal, he cannot be hardhearted, devoid of sympathy. He cannot be coarse in his speech. He cannot be full of pomposity and self-esteem. He cannot be overbearing, nor can he use harsh words, and censure and condemn.

"The labor of love springs from the work of faith. . . . 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.' "—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1111.

12. What will faith working by love enable God to do for the believer? James 2:24.

NOTE.—"A living faith in Christ will bring every action of the life and every emotion of the soul into harmony with God's truth and righteousness."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 527.

"Those who are justified by faith must have a heart to keep the way of the Lord. It is an evidence that a man is not justified by faith when his works do not correspond to his profession. . . .

"The faith that does not produce good works does not justify the soul. . . .

"Imputation of the righteousness of Christ comes through justifying faith, and is the justification for which Paul so earnestly contends."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 397.

Faith Without Works is Dead

13. Whose example demonstrates that even the most depraved sinner can attain to justification? James 2:25.

NOTE.—"Abraham was noted for piety; Rahab for immorality. Abraham believed for many years before the offering up of Isaac; Rahab possessed a young faith. But both proved their faith by their utter disregard for personal security and by casting their lot with God's program. James shows that the most venerated of the faithful and the most despised of the Gentiles alike find justification through a faith that works." —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, on James 2:25.

14. To what is faith without works finally compared? James 2:26.

Questions for Meditation

1. Is my faith practical or merely theoretical?
2. Have I banished all fear from my life through perfect trust in God?
3. Would my faith stand a test like that brought to Abraham?

Lesson 6, for August 10, 1968

Teachers of Present Truth—Wise and Unwise

MEMORY VERSE: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12:3.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 501-508; "Evangelism," pages 623-627; "Selected Messages," Bk. 1, pp. 361-363; "Early Writings," pages 61-64; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To become fully aware of the privileges and responsibilities of witnesses for Jesus in these last days of earth's history.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Office of Teacher in the Christian Church

1. Jesus among the rabbis. Luke 2:46.
2. Jesus recognized as a teacher from God. John 3:2.
3. John's disciples recognized Jesus as a teacher from God. John 1: 38, 49.
4. Jesus as a teacher. Matt. 4:23 (first part).
5. Results depend on teaching the words of Jesus. Mark 16:16; John 12:48.
6. Jesus' charge to His disciples. Matt. 28:19, 20.
7. Teaching a gift of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:11, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11.

II. The High Standard of Conduct Required of Teachers

8. An admonition concerning eagerness to become a teacher. James 3:1 (first part).
9. Teachers judged by a higher standard. James 3:1 (last part).
10. Judgment proportionate to entrusted talent. Luke 12:47, 48.

III. Two Kinds of Teachers and Their Rewards

11. The wrong kind of teacher. 2 Tim. 4:3, 4.
12. Punishment of false teachers. 2 Peter 2:1; Phil. 3:18, 19.
13. The right kind of teacher and his reward. Dan. 12:3 (margin).

THE LESSON

Introduction

Following the clear and forceful explanation of the relationship between faith and works in chapter 2, James utters a warning against being eager to teach without adequate preparation and due consideration of the heavy responsibilities resting upon those who undertake to instruct others concerning salvation.

The Office of Teacher in the Christian Church

1. Where did Joseph and Mary find Jesus after a three-day search? What was He doing? Luke 2:46.

2. What credentials as a teacher did Nicodemus recognize in Jesus? John 3:2.

NOTE.—"The whole line of study in our schools should be to prepare a people for the future, immortal life.

"Jesus Christ is the knowledge of the Father, and Christ is our great teacher sent from God. . . .

"It is of immense importance, in the light of the lessons of Christ, that every human being should study the Scriptures, that he may be convinced in whom his hopes of eternal life are centered."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education,* pages 383, 384.

"Christ was a teacher sent from God, and His words did not contain a particle of chaff or a semblance of that which is nonessential. But the force of much human instruction is comprised in assertion, not in truth. The teachers of the present day can only use the educated ability of previous teachers; and yet with all the weighty importance which may be attached to the words of the greatest authors, there is a conscious inability to trace them back to the first great principle, the Source of unerring wisdom, from which teachers derive their authority. There is a painful uncertainty, a constant searching and reaching for assurances that can only be found in God. The trumpet of human greatness may be sounded, but it is with an uncertain sound; it is not reliable, and the salvation of human souls cannot be ventured upon it."—*Ibid.,* p. 407.

3. What title did John's disciples apply to Jesus, showing that they recognized Him as a teacher? John 1: 38, 49.

NOTE.—"Rabbi. . . . A title of respect, by which pupils addressed their teachers. . . . A courteous form of address, generally equivalent to our 'sir.' It is applied to Christ in Mt 26:25; Mk 14:45; Jn 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26; 4:31; 6:25; 9:2; 11:8; etc., and to John the Baptist in Jn 3:26. Christ counseled His disciples against coveting or using this title (Mt 23:7, 8)."—*S.D.A. Bible Dictionary,* Article, "Rabbi."

4. How is Jesus' work in Galilee described? Matt. 4:23 (first part). Compare Matt. 26:55.

NOTE.—"The Prince of teachers, He sought access to the people by the pathway of their most familiar associations. He presented the truth in such a way that ever after it was to His hearers intertwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. He taught in a way that made them feel the completeness of His identification with their interests and happiness. His instruction was so direct, His illustrations were so appropriate, His words so sympathetic and cheerful, that His hearers were charmed. The simplicity and earnestness with which He addressed the needy, hallowed every word."—*The Ministry of Healing,* pages 23, 24.

"In every human being, however fallen, He beheld a son of God, one who might be restored to the privilege of his divine relationship."—*Education,* page 79.

5. What vital result depends on the teaching of the words of Jesus? Mark 16:16; John 12:48.

NOTE.—"In the golden censer of truth, as presented in Christ's teachings, we have that which will convict and convert souls. Proclaim, in the simplicity of Christ, the truths that He came to this world to proclaim, and the power of your message will make itself felt. Do not advocate theories or tests that Christ has never mentioned, and that have no foundation in the Bible. We have grand, solemn truths for the people. 'It is written' is the test that must be brought home to every soul." —*Gospel Workers,* page 309.

6. Just before Jesus left this world, what did He command His disciples to teach to all people? Matt. 28:19, 20.

NOTE.—"What the church needs in these days of peril, is an army of workers who, like Paul, have educated themselves for usefulness, who have a deep experience in the things of God, and who are filled with earnestness and zeal. Sanctified, self-sacrificing men are needed; men who are brave and true; men in whose hearts Christ is formed, 'the hope of glory,' and who with lips touched with holy fire will 'preach the word.' For the want of such workers the cause of God languishes, and fatal errors, like a deadly poison, taint the morals and blight the hopes of a large part of the human race.

"As the faithful, toil-worn standard-bearers are offering up their lives for the truth's sake, who will come forward to take their place? Will our young men accept the holy trust at the hand of their fathers? Are they preparing to fill the vacancies made by the death of the faithful? Will the apostle's charge be heeded, the call to duty be heard, amid the incitements to selfishness and ambition that allure the youth?"—*Gospel Workers,* pages 61, 62.

7. How are teachers of the gospel chosen for their work? 1 Cor. 12:11, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11.

NOTE.—"The perfection of the church depends not on each member being fashioned exactly alike. God calls for each one to take his proper place, to stand in his lot to do his appointed work according to the ability which has been given him."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 6, p. 1090.

The High Standard of Conduct Required of Teachers

8. What caution is given concerning becoming a teacher? James 3:1 (first part).

NOTE.—The form of the Greek verb translated "be not," has the force of "stop becoming." James is apparently advising

church members to move cautiously in their enthusiasm to become teachers, to take time to count the cost.

9. Why should one, before assuming the responsibility of teaching truth, consider the matter most carefully? James 3:1 (last part).

NOTE.—"There are degrees of responsibility in the work of the Lord, and those who presume to teach will be held accountable both for their personal conduct and for their influence upon others. . . . The teacher is expected to know God's will more thoroughly than others, and his conduct should be correspondingly exemplary."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 3:1.

10. In relation to their entrusted talents, by what principle will men be judged? Luke 12:47, 48.

NOTE.—"According to their responsibility will be the punishment of those who know the truth and yet disregard God's commands."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, p. 96.

"God's test of the heathen, who have not the light, and of those living where the knowledge of truth and light has been abundant, is altogether different. He accepts from those in heathen lands a phase of righteousness which does not satisfy Him when offered by those of Christian lands. He does not require much where much has not been bestowed."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 5, p. 1121.

Two Kinds of Teachers and Their Rewards

11. What type of teaching will some last-day Christians desire? 2 Tim. 4:3, 4. Compare 2 Tim. 3:5.

NOTE.—"The apostle does not here refer to the openly irreligious, but to the professing Christians who make inclination their guide, and thus become enslaved by self. Such are willing to listen to those doctrines only that do not rebuke their sins or condemn their pleasure-loving course. They are offended by the plain words of the faithful servants of Christ and choose teachers who praise and flatter them. And among professing ministers there are those who preach the opinions of men instead of the Word of God. Unfaithful to their trust, they lead astray those who look to them for spiritual guidance."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 504, 505.

12. What fate awaits false teachers who teach contrary to the Word of God? 2 Peter 2:1; Phil. 3:18, 19.

NOTE.—"While exalting the 'sure word of prophecy' as a safe guide in times of peril, the apostle solemnly warned the church against the torch of false prophecy, which would be uplifted by 'false teachers,' who would privily bring in 'damnable heresies, even denying the Lord.' These false teachers, arising in the church and accounted true by many of their brethren in the faith, the apostle compared to 'wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever.' 'The latter end is worse with them,' he declared, 'than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.' "—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 535.

13. How are true teachers described, and what will be their reward? Dan. 12:3 (margin).

NOTE.—He who knows and loves Jesus will gladly accept the wonderful responsibility of being measured by a higher standard and will respond to the Saviour's call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" by saying, "Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8.

"The messengers should watch for souls as they that must give account. . . . They will have to lay aside worldly interests and comforts and make it their first object to do all in their power to advance the cause of present truth and save perishing souls.

"They will also have a rich reward. In their crowns of rejoicing those who are

rescued by them and finally saved will shine as stars forever and ever. And to all eternity they will enjoy the satisfaction of having done what they could in presenting the truth in its purity and beauty, so that souls fell in love with it, were sanctified through it, and availed themselves of the inestimable privilege of being made rich, and being washed in the blood of the Lamb and redeemed unto God."—*Early Writings*, page 61.

Questions for Meditation

1. Do I recognize that I have been called by God to teach the gospel to those within my sphere of influence? (See *The Desire of Ages*, page 822.)

2. Do I see "in every human being, however fallen, . . . one who might be restored to the privilege of his divine relationship"?

3. Am I a "teacher" who cannot be influenced by bribes or threats?

Lesson 7, for August 17, 1968

Use and Abuse of the Talent of Speech

LESSON SCRIPTURE: James 3:2-12.

MEMORY VERSE: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Proverbs 25:11.

STUDY HELPS: "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 335-339; "The Adventist Home," pages 434-443; "Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students," pages 237-247; "Messages to Young People," pages 134-136, 327, 328; "Gospel Workers," pages 117-123; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To develop a more vivid awareness of the vital role of the tongue in determining the measure of happiness experienced in this world and the next.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Speech and Christian Perfection

1. Everyone makes mistakes. James 3:2 (first part); Rom. 3:23.
2. Flawless speech a mark of perfection. James 3:2 (second part).
3. Control of the tongue an index to complete self-control. James 3:2 (last part).

II. Right and Wrong Uses of the Talent of Speech

4. Horses controlled by bridles and bits. James 3:3, 5.
5. Great ships controlled by small rudders. James 3:4.
6. Blessing promised to the meek. Matt. 5:5.
7. The tongue compared to fire. James 3:6.
8. Animals can be tamed, but not the tongue. James 3:8; Matt. 12:34.
9. A warning against inconsistent speech. James 3:9, 10.
10. Inconsistent speech illustrated. James 3:11.

III. Speech an Index to Character

11. "By their fruits." Matt. 7:15-20.
12. A genuine Christian not "double-tongued." James 3:12.
13. The beauty of appropriate words. Prov. 25:11.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"The talent of speech ranks with the highest gifts."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 936. Therefore it is important for us to give the most serious consideration to the proper use of the tongue.

Speech and Christian Perfection

1. What is said concerning the number of those who make mistakes? James 3:2 (first part); Rom. 3:23.

NOTE.—"The sinner may err, but he is not cast off without mercy. His only hope, however, is repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Father's prerogative to forgive our transgressions and sins, because Christ has taken upon Himself our guilt and reprieved us, imputing to us His own righteousness. His sacrifice satisfies fully the demands of justice."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 6, p. 1070.

2. What is one evidence that a person has attained to a state of perfection? James 3:2 (second part). Compare 1 Peter 3:10, 11.

NOTE.—"Through the help that Christ can give, we shall be able to learn to bridle the tongue. Sorely as He was tried on the point of hasty and angry speech, He never once sinned with His lips. With patient calmness He met the sneers, the taunts, and the ridicule of His fellow workers at the carpenter's bench. Instead of retorting angrily, He would begin to sing one of David's beautiful psalms; and His companions, before realizing what they were doing, would unite with Him in the hymn. What a transformation would be wrought in this world if men and women today would follow Christ's example in the use of words."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 936.

3. What will a person who can bridle his tongue be able to do with the rest of his body? James 3:2 (last part). Compare Ps. 39:1.

NOTE.—"I have been shown that we have a great work before us to search our own hearts, and watch ourselves with jealous care. We should learn wherein we fail, and then guard ourselves upon that point. We must have perfect control over our own spirit. 'If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.' The light that shines upon our path, the truth that commends itself to our consciences, will condemn and destroy the soul, or sanctify and transform it. We are living too near the close of probation to be content with a superficial work."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 1, p. 308.

"The greatest triumph given us by the religion of Christ is control over ourselves. Our natural propensities must be controlled, or we can never overcome as Christ overcame."—*Ibid.,* Vol. 4, p. 235.

Right and Wrong Uses of the Talent of Speech

4. What illustration does James use to show the importance of controlling the tongue? James 3:3, 5.

NOTE.—"As an unruly horse endangers the life of its rider, so an unruly tongue jeopardizes the whole Christian experience. Obedience and control are desirable for men as well as for domesticated animals."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 3:3.

5. What other example is given of the great power that small things exercise? James 3:4.

NOTE.—"The horse . . . possesses its own headstrong will and a ship is the victim of strong winds, but both forces can be controlled by a relatively small device."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 3:4.

6. In contrast with the boasting tongue of James 3:5, how did Jesus describe those who will inherit the earth? Matt. 5:5. Compare James 3:5.

NOTE.—"The language of the meek is never that of boasting. Like the child Samuel, they pray, 'Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.' When Joshua was placed in the highest position of honor, as commander of Israel, he bade defiance to all the enemies of God. His heart was filled with

noble thoughts of his great mission. Yet upon the intimation of a message from Heaven, he placed himself in the position of a little child to be directed. 'What saith my Lord unto His servant?' was his response. . . .

"Meekness in the school of Christ is one of the marked fruits of the Spirit. It is a grace wrought by the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier, and enables its possessor at all times to control a rash and impetuous temper. . . .

"Meekness is the inward adorning, which God estimates as of great price. . . . He who garnished the heavens with the orbs of light has by the same Spirit promised that 'He will beautify the meek with salvation.' Angels of heaven will register as best adorned those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ and walk with Him in meekness and lowliness of mind."—Ellen G. White, *My Life Today,* page 253.

7. How widespread is the effect of the fire that the tongue sets ablaze? James 3:6.

NOTE.—"Who does not love life and desire good days? yet how few comply with the conditions, to refrain the tongue from evil and the lips from speaking guile. Few are willing to follow the Saviour's example of meekness and humility. Many ask the Lord to humble them, but are unwilling to submit to the needful discipline. When the test comes, when trials or even annoyances occur, the heart rebels, and the tongue utters words that are like poisoned arrows or blasting hail. . . .

"The sin of evil speaking begins with the cherishing of evil thoughts. Guile includes impurity in all its forms. An impure thought tolerated, an unholy desire cherished, and the soul is contaminated, its integrity compromised. . . . Every unholy thought must be instantly repelled. To your closet, followers of Christ. Pray in faith and with all the heart. Satan is watching to ensnare your feet. You must have help from above if you would escape his devices."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 5, pp. 176, 177.

8. Why is it impossible for man, by himself, to subdue the tongue? James 3:8; Matt. 12:34. Compare Jer. 17:9.

NOTE.—The tongue expresses that which is in the heart (Matt. 12:34), and the heart is deceitful and wicked (Jer. 17:9). Therefore the tongue gives utterance to the selfish ideas of the unconverted heart.

"Every passion must be under the control of enlightened conscience. . . .

"If you cherish a habitual impression that God sees and hears all that you do and say, and keeps a faithful record of all your words and actions, and that you must meet it all, then in all you do and say you will seek to follow the dictates of an enlightened and wakeful conscience. Your tongue will be used to the glory of God and will be a source of blessing to yourself and to others. But if you separate from God, . . . take heed lest your tongue shall prove a world of iniquity and bring upon you fearful condemnation; for souls will be lost through you."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, pp. 243, 244.

9. What emphatic comment does James make about the inconsistency of the tongue? James 3:9, 10.

NOTE.—It is entirely contrary to reason or the fitness of things for one who professes to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus to permit degrading words to issue from his lips, especially such as to belittle any man for whom Christ gave His life.

"The religion of Jesus softens whatever is hard and rough in the temper, and smooths whatever is rugged and sharp in the manners. It makes the words gentle and the demeanor winning. Let us learn from Christ how to combine a high sense of purity and integrity with sunniness of disposition. A kind, courteous Christian is the most powerful argument that can be produced in favor of Christianity."—*Gospel Workers,* page 122.

10. What illustration of the inconsistency of the tongue is given? James 3:11.

NOTE.—"Can an impure fountain send forth sweet waters? Why should we wade through the mass of error contained in the works of pagans and infidels, for the sake

of obtaining the benefit of a few intellectual truths, when all truth is at our command?" —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 167.

Speech an Index to Character

11. What is the conclusive test of character? Matt. 7:15-20.

NOTE.—"Men boldly teach for doctrines the commandments of men; and as traditions pass on from age to age, they acquire a power over the human mind. But age does not make error truth, neither does its burdensome weight cause the plant of truth to become a parasite. The tree of truth bears its own genuine fruit, sowing its true origin and nature. The parasite of error also bears its own fruit, and makes manifest that its character is diverse from the plant of heavenly origin."—*Evangelism*, page 589.

12. How does James clinch the argument that a true Christian will not be "double-tongued"? James 3:12.

NOTE.—"If the mind and heart are full of the love of God, this will be revealed in the conversation. It will not be a difficult matter to impart that which enters into our spiritual life. Great thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, unselfish purposes, yearnings for piety and holiness, will bear fruit in words that reveal the character of the heart treasure."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 338.

13. By what beautiful simile did Solomon commend appropriate language? Prov. 25:11.

NOTE.—"Christ taught His disciples how to conduct themselves when in the company of others. He instructed them in regard to the duties and regulations of true social life, which are the same as the laws of the kingdom of God. He taught the disciples, by example, that when attending any public gathering, they need not want for something to say. His conversation when at a feast differed most decidedly from that which had been listened to at feasts in the past. Every word He uttered was a savor of life unto life. He spoke with clearness and simplicity. His words were as apples of gold in pictures of silver."—*My Life Today*, page 190.

"What rays of softness and beauty shone forth in the daily life of our Saviour! What sweetness flowed from His very presence! . . . Those with whom Christ dwells will be surrounded with a divine atmosphere. Their white robes of purity will be fragrant with perfume from the garden of the Lord."—*Ibid.*, p. 191.

Questions for Meditation

1. Do I understand and appreciate the importance of the use of accurate speech?
2. Are my words always edifying?
3. Do I realize that many of life's problems are the result of faulty expressions of thought?

Lesson 8, for August 24, 1968

True and False Wisdom Contrasted

LESSON SCRIPTURE: James 3:13-18.

MEMORY VERSE: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Ps. 111:10.

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies," Vol. 5, pp. 167-177, 217-235; "Ibid.," Vol. 8, pp. 239-243; "The Sanctified Life," pages 34-41; "Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," pages 6-9 (1943 ed., pages 17-21); "The Great Controversy," pages 469-478.

STUDY AIM: To show the infinite superiority of the wisdom from above over the "wisdom" of the world, the desirability of a life in harmony with that wisdom, and the folly of striving for worldly wisdom.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. An Inspired Description of Wisdom

1. The "fear" of the Lord. Ps. 111:10. (first part); Prov. 1:7.
2. This fear expressed by obedience. Ps. 111:10 (second part).
3. "Fear" equated with "reverence." Ps. 111:9 (last part).
4. Superiority of true wisdom. Prov. 3:13-18.

II. True Wisdom Demonstrated by Its Results

5. Meekness characteristic of one who possesses heavenly wisdom. James 3:13.
6. Meekness the result of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:22, 23.
7. Moses an outstanding illustration of meekness. Num. 12:3.
8. Evil fruits of worldly wisdom. James 3:14, 15.
9. Worldly wisdom brings confusion into the church. James 3:16.

III. The Beauty of Heavenly Wisdom

10. True wisdom comes from God. James 3:17 (first part).
11. The purity of Heaven-born wisdom. James 3:17 (first part).
12. Other qualities of true wisdom. James 3:17 (second part).
13. The simplicity of true wisdom. James 3:17 (last part).
14. The effect of true wisdom. James 3:18.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"In His Word the Lord enumerates the gifts and graces that are indispensable for all who connect with His work. He does not teach us to ignore learning or despise education; for when controlled by the love and fear of God, intellectual culture is a blessing; yet this is not presented as the most important qualification for the service of God. Jesus passed by the wise men of His time, the men of education and position, because they were so proud and self-sufficient in their boasted superiority that they could not sympathize with suffering humanity and become colaborers with the Man of Nazareth. In their bigotry they scorned to be taught by Christ. . . . The attributes of the character of Christ can be imparted to those only who distrust themselves. The highest scientific education cannot in itself develop a Christlike character. The fruits of true wisdom come from Christ alone."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 259.

An Inspired Description of Wisdom

1. What should be the first step in one's search for wisdom? Ps. 111:10 (first part); Prov. 1:7.

NOTE.—"The fear of the Lord is that reverent attitude compounded of love, awe, and gratitude that distinguishes men who have realized their own unworthiness and have found salvation in God's gracious plan."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Prov. 1:7.

The word rendered "beginning" in Psalm 111:10 may also mean "principal part." The fear of the Lord is not only the first step in the acquirement of all true knowledge, but also the central emphasis of knowledge. If knowledge does not lead to a surrender of the life to Christ, it has missed its aim. " 'Call no man brilliant who has not the wisdom to choose the Lord Jesus Christ—the light and life of the world. The excellence of a man is determined by his possession of the virtues of Christ.' "—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Prov. 1:7.

2. How does the "fear of the Lord," which is the central emphasis of knowledge, manifest itself? Ps. 111:10 (second part). Compare Deut. 4:5, 6; Eccl. 12:13.

NOTE.—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It lies at the foundation of a proper education. Those who,

having a favorable opportunity, have failed to learn this first great lesson, are not only disqualified for service in the cause of God, but are a positive injury to the community in which they live."—*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 208.

3. Of what divine attributes are men admonished to be aware? Ps. 111:9 (last part). Compare Luke 1:49.

NOTE.—"*Reverend.* From the Hebrew *yara'*, 'to fear.' . . . The form of the verb here used, *nora'*, means literally, 'to be feared,' or 'to be reverenced.' "—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Ps. 111:9.

"If Christ were on earth today, surrounded by those who bear the title of 'Reverend' or 'Right Reverend,' would He not repeat His saying, 'Neither be ye called masters: for One is your Master, even Christ'? The Scripture declares of God, 'Holy and reverend is His name.' Ps. 111:9. To what human being is such a title befitting? How little does man reveal of the wisdom and righteousness it indicates! How many of those who assume this title are misrepresenting the name and character of God! Alas, how often have worldly ambition, despotism, and the basest sins been hidden under the broidered garments of a high and holy office!"—*The Desire of Ages,* page 613. See also *Evangelism,* page 133.

4. What does the man who obtains wisdom acquire along with it? Prov. 3:13-18.

True Wisdom Demonstrated by Its Results

5. What is one outstanding characteristic of the man who possesses true wisdom? James 3:13.

NOTE.—The word translated "conversation" in James 3:13 means *conduct,* or *way of life.*

"The soul that is constantly looking unto Jesus will see His self-denying love and deep humility, and will copy His example."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 5, p. 175.

6. Of what is meekness the result? Gal. 5:22, 23.

7. Who is given credit as being the meekest man? Num. 12:3.

NOTE.—"If men desire to be honored by God, let them be humble. Those who carry forward God's work should be distinguished from all others by their humility. Of the man who is noted for his meekness, Christ says, He can be trusted. Through him I can reveal Myself to the world. He will not weave into the web any threads of selfishness. I will manifest Myself to him as I do not to the world."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 1, p. 1113.

8. What are the results of acquiring the wisdom the world offers? James 3:14, 15. Compare Rom. 13:12-14; Gal. 5:19-21.

NOTE.—"The wisdom which spiritualism imparts is that described by the apostle James, which 'descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.' . . . This, however, the great deceiver conceals, when concealment will best suit his purpose. . . . He appeals to the reason by the presentation of elevating themes; he delights the fancy with enrapturing scenes; and he enlists the affections by his eloquent portrayals of love and charity. He excites the imagination to lofty flights, leading men to take so great pride in their own wisdom that in their hearts they despise the Eternal One. That mighty being who could take the world's Redeemer to an exceedingly high mountain and bring before Him all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them, will present his temptations to men in a manner to pervert the senses of all who are not shielded by divine power."—*The Great Controversy,* page 554.

9. How is confusion sometimes brought into the church? James 3:16. Compare 1 Cor. 1:10, 11.

NOTE.—"How true are the words of the apostle, 'Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.' One person in an institution or in a church who gives loose rein to unkind thoughts by speaking evil of the brethren, may stir up the worst passions of the human heart, and spread abroad a leaven of evil that will work in all who come into association with him. In this way the enemy of all righteousness gains the victory, and the result of his work is to make of no effect the Saviour's prayer when He pleaded that His disciples might be one as He is one with the Father."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 937.

The Beauty of Heavenly Wisdom

10. Who is the source of true wisdom? James 3:17 (first part). Compare James 1:17.

11. To what does James point as the first characteristic of divine wisdom? James 3:17 (first part).

NOTE.—"The apostle James declares that the wisdom from above is 'first pure.' "—*The Great Controversy,* page 474. The context of this statement is worthy of careful study.

"But the words of Jesus, 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' have a deeper meaning —not merely pure in the sense in which the world understands purity, free from that which is sensual, pure from lust, but true in the hidden purposes and motives of the soul, free from pride and self-seeking, humble, unselfish, childlike."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* page 25.

"The pure in heart live as in the visible presence of God during the time He apportions them in this world. And they will also see Him face to face in the future, immortal state, as did Adam when he walked and talked with God in Eden." —*Ibid.,* p. 27.

12. What further qualities of true wisdom does James enumerate? James 3:17 (second part).

13. What is the final characteristic of true wisdom? James 3:17 (last part). Compare Rom. 12:9; 1 Peter 2:1.

14. To what striking effect does James point as the climax of true wisdom? James 3:18.

NOTE.—"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

"It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 69.

Questions for Meditation

1. Have I learned the secret of true meekness?

2. If obedience to God's commandments would make the ancient Israelites "marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world" (*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, p. 222), what about Seventh-day Adventists, both individually and collectively, today?

3. Am I enjoying the health that results from walking in the path of wisdom?

The Carnal Mind and the Spiritual Mind

MEMORY VERSE: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded." James 4:7, 8.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 196-200; "Testimonies," Vol. 1, pp. 438-442; Vol. 8, pp. 312-318; "Selected Messages," Bk. 1, pp. 216-220; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To show that "it is not alone the professed belief in the binding claims of God's law that makes the Christian, but also the carrying out of that law." —"Testimonies," Vol. 4, p. 58.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Wrong Motivation for Prayer

1. Selfishness—the basic cause of strife and confusion. James 4:1.
2. The unrenewed heart cannot find true satisfaction. James 4:2 (first part).
3. Seeking happiness in the wrong way. James 4:2 (last part).
4. Selfish motives result in disappointment. James 4:3.

II. Friendship With the World Incompatible With Friendship With God

5. God's estimate of worldly-minded Christians. James 4:4 (first part).
6. To love worldliness means to be an enemy of God. James 4:4 (last part).
7. Human failure to appreciate friendship with God. 1 Cor. 2:14.
8. Man's natural tendency. James 4:5.

III. The Triumph of Grace

9. God's grace greater than the power of temptation. James 4:6 (first part); Rom. 5:20, 21.
10. God's grace given to the humble. James 4:6 (last part).
11. The secret of victory over the devil. James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9.
12. No divided loyalties. James 4:8, 9.
13. Humility brings true satisfaction. James 4:10.

THE LESSON

Introduction

By nature man is inclined to selfishness and fleshly gratification: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17:9. Paul repeats this sentiment in Romans 8: 6-8, emphasizing the impossibility of living to satisfy the demands of the unconverted body and of being in harmony with God at the same time. This never-ending struggle between the "flesh" and the "spirit" is discussed in the first part of the fourth chapter of James, and the secret of victory is pointed out.

The Wrong Motivation for Prayer

1. What is the source of quarreling and fighting in the church? James 4:1.

NOTE.—"The apostle now takes up the specific evils within the church that are the product of untamed tongues and strife-ridden hearts. The root cause of all division and confusion is self-interest."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:1.

2. Does the indulgence of bodily desires bring satisfaction? James 4:2 (first part).

NOTE.—"Lust." This is a different word from that rendered "lusts" in the first verse. Here the word is *epithumeō,* which means "yearn for passionately."

"Self-interest, if unchecked, grows into the sin of covetousness. . . . A covetous man never feels that he has fully acquired all that he needs."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:2.

3. Why do illegitimate desires, contention, and strife not bring happiness? James 4:2 (last part).

NOTE.—"These contentious ones depended upon their own efforts for what they desired instead of depending upon God to provide what was best for them. God has implanted legitimate desires and basic wants within the human heart . . . , and, in part, happiness is dependent upon satisfying those God-given desires. When men attempt to satisfy these basic desires in illegitimate ways, disappointment, envy, and strife are certain to follow."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:2.

4. What kind of prayer results in disappointment? James 4:3.

NOTE.—"The Saviour longs to give us a greater blessing than we ask; and He delays the answer to our request that He may show us the evil of our own hearts, and our deep need of His grace. He desires us to renounce the selfishness that leads us to seek Him. Confessing our helplessness and bitter need, we are to trust ourselves wholly to His love."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 200.

Friendship With the World Incompatible With Friendship With God

5. How does God regard professed Christians who are friends of the world? James 4:4 (first part).

NOTE.—"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. 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean.' 2 Cor. 6:17. God requires of His people now as great a distinction from the world, in customs, habits, and principles, as He required of Israel anciently. If they faithfully follow the teachings of His Word, this distinction will exist; it cannot be otherwise. The warnings given to the Hebrews against assimilating with the heathen were not more direct or explicit than are those forbidding Christians to conform to the spirit and customs of the ungodly. Christ speaks to us, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' . . . The followers of Christ are to separate themselves from sinners, choosing their society only when there is opportunity to do them good. We cannot be too decided in shunning the company of those who exert an influence to draw us away from God. While we pray, 'Lead us not into temptation,' we are to shun temptation, so far as possible."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 458, 459.

6. How does James stress that it is impossible for friends of the world to love God? James 4:4 (last part). Compare Rom. 8:5-7 (R.S.V.); Matt. 6:24.

NOTE.—"Said the angel, . . . 'The spirit and friendship of the world are at enmity with God. When the truth in its simplicity and strength, as it is in Jesus, is brought to bear against the spirit of the world, it at once awakens the spirit of persecution. Very many who profess to be Christians have not known God. The natural heart has not been changed, and the carnal mind remains at enmity with God. They are Satan's faithful servants, notwithstanding they have assumed another name.' "—*Early Writings,* pages 273, 274.

7. Why is it impossible for the natural man to appreciate the privilege of friendship with God? 1 Cor. 2:14.

NOTE.—"Precious jewels of truth, that are of the highest value to the meek and lowly ones who believe in Christ, are as foolishness to him who is wise in the world's estimation. But truth, eternal truth, is ever present with the true believer. The Spirit is the appointed instructor of such a soul, his guide, his continual strength and righteousness."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 6, p. 1085.

8. What is man's natural tendency? James 4:5.

NOTE.—"The friendship of church members for the world grieves the 'jealous' Spirit of God, who seeks our undivided affections. Man's jealousy is selfish; God's jealousy reflects simply His intense concern for the welfare of His children."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:5.

The Triumph of Grace

9. What provision has God made to enable His people to resist worldly temptations? James 4:6 (first part); Rom. 5:20, 21.

NOTE.—"God demands undivided allegiance, but He also provides man with sufficient strength to enable him to obey." —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:6.

10. To whom does God give grace? James 4:6 (last part). Compare Ps. 138:6.

11. What is the secret of victory over the devil? James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9.

NOTE.—"How precious to the tempted soul is this positive promise. Now if the one in trouble and temptation keeps his eye fixed on Jesus, and draws nigh to God, talking of His goodness and mercy, Jesus draws nigh to him, and his annoyances that he thought almost unbearable vanish. . . .

"The soul that loves God, loves to draw strength from Him by constant communion with Him. When it becomes the habit of the soul to converse with God, the power of the evil one is broken; for Satan cannot abide near the soul that draws nigh unto God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 937.

12. What further admonition is given those who would resist worldliness and enjoy communion with God? James 4:8, 9.

NOTE.—"The Lord says, 'Draw nigh to God.' How? By secret, earnest examination of your own heart, by childlike, heartfelt, humble dependence upon God, making known all your weakness to Jesus, and by confessing your sins. Thus you may draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.

"But let us read the remainder of the lesson given for our instruction, that we may more fully comprehend what it means to draw nigh to God. 'Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.' The work that is essential to be done by the sinner is here clearly defined. It is a work not agreeable to the inclination of the human heart; but unless it is done the soul is not in a condition to appreciate the purity and perfection of the character of Christ, and in no condition either to understand the offensiveness of sin. The exhortation is given, 'Purify your hearts, ye double-minded.' While professing to be Christians, many have the mold of the world upon them, and, their affections are not set upon God. They are double-minded, making an attempt to serve God and mammon at the same time. . . .

"Of what profit is it to say pleasant things, to deplore the work of Satan, and yet at the same time to enter into the fulfillment of all his devices? This is being double-minded." Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 938.

13. What will be the result of true humility? James 4:10. Compare Luke 18:9-14.

NOTE.—James here summarizes his counsel concerning "an undivided loyalty to the will of God. For an honest man, a true

picture of personal wretchedness produces a humble spirit before God, who is ever willing to forgive."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:10.

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

Questions for Meditation

1. Have I learned to pray uselfishly?
2. Realizing that there is a certain type of pleasure to be found in sin, am I sufficiently spiritually motivated to deny myself the "pleasures of sin" for His sake who gave up the pleasures of heaven for me?
3. Has the "world" lost all its appeal, so far as I am concerned, and can I say with Paul, "For to me to live is Christ"? (Phil. 1:21.)

Lesson 10, for September 7, 1968

The Folly of Exalting Self

MEMORY VERSE: "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." James 4:15.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 685-694; "Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," pages 102, 123, 124, (1943 ed., pp. 177-179); "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 390-404; "Prophets and Kings," pages 593-596; "The Ministry of Healing," pages 452-457; "Testimonies," Vol. 4, pp. 306-313; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To become more mindful of our spiritual, mental, and physical weakness, of our dependence on God in all things.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Criticism of Church Members Rebuked

1. Brethren not to accuse one another. James 4:11 (first part); Eph. 4:31, 32; 1 Peter 2:1.
2. Fault-finding evidences a lack of love. James 4:11 (second part); Matt. 7:1-5.
3. He who criticizes others places himself above the law. James 4:11 (last part).
4. One who cannot read the heart cannot judge others. James 4:12.

II. Conscious Dependence on the Lord's Will

5. To be absorbed in worldly business is unwise. Luke 12:16-21.
6. The uncertainty of tomorrow. James 4:14 (first part); Prov. 27:1.
7. The brevity of life. James 4:14 (last part); Job 14:2; Ps. 102:3, 11.
8. The true Christian submits his plans to God. James 4:15.
9. Jesus the supreme example of submission. John 6:38.

III. Self-glorification Leads to Sin

10. Pride in being independent of God. James 4:16 (first part).
11. God's evaluation of false pride. James 4:16 (last part).
12. Deliberate neglect of known duty is sin. James 4:17.
13. Calm trust in God brings satisfaction and peace. Prov. 3:5-8; Isa. 26:3, 4.

Introduction

Beginning with verse 11 of chapter 4, James returns to a consideration of the evils that hamper the progress of the church. Prominent among these evils is self-exaltation, with its resulting attitude of criticism and failure to recognize that without Christ we can do nothing. Consciousness of the frailty and brevity of human life leads to humble dependence, not on one's own efforts and achievements, but on God.

Criticism of Church Members Rebuked

1. In their conversation, what should Christians avoid? James 4:11 (first part); Eph. 4:31, 32; 1 Peter 2:1.

NOTE.—"We cannot read the heart. Ourselves faulty, we are not qualified to sit in judgment upon others. Finite men can judge only from outward appearance. To Him alone who knows the secret springs of action, and who deals tenderly and compassionately, is it given to decide the case of every soul. . . .

"Those who condemn or criticize others, proclaim themselves guilty, for they do the same things. In condemning others, they are passing sentence upon themselves, and God declares that this sentence is just. He accepts their own verdict against themselves."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 124.

"He who indulges a censorious spirit is guilty of greater sin than is the one he accuses, for he not only commits the same sin, but adds to it conceit and censoriousness."—*Ibid.*, p. 125.

2. What does the fault-finding critic reveal concerning himself? James 4: 11 (second part); Matt. 7:1-5.

NOTE.—"Harsh judgment of any kind is inconsistent with the spirit of the moral law. The principle of love is violated by the desire for self-assertion and by criticism of others."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, on James 4:11.

3. What does the critic acknowledge concerning his attitude to the law? James 4:11 (last part).

NOTE.—"It should not be regarded as a light thing to speak evil of others or to make ourselves judges of their motives or actions. 'He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.' James 4:11. There is but one Judge—He 'who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.' 1 Cor. 4:5. And whoever takes it upon himself to judge and condemn his fellowmen is usurping the prerogative of the Creator."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 385, 386.

4. In view of the fact that there is only one infallible Judge, what question does James ask of the critic who judges his brother's motives? James 4:12. Compare Rom. 14:4, 11-13.

Conscious Dependence on the Lord's Will

5. By what parable did Jesus show the folly of planning for future activities without considering the will of God? Luke 12:16-21. Compare James 4:13.

NOTE.—"When Christ was on earth, He was brought in contact with some whose imaginations were fevered with the hope of worldly gain. They were never at rest, but were constantly trying something new, and their extravagant expectations were aroused only to be disappointed. Jesus knew the wants of the human heart, which are the same in all ages; and He called their attention to the only permanent riches. . . . He tells men of treasure beyond estimate, which is within the reach of all. He came to earth to guide their minds in their search for this treasure. The way is

marked out; the very poorest who will follow Him will be made richer than the most wealthy upon earth who know not Jesus, and they will be made increasingly rich by sharing their happiness with others."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 261, 262.

6. How much can a man know about tomorrow? James 4:14 (first part); Prov. 27:1.

7. What is said of the frailty of human life? James 4:14 (last part); Job 14:2; Ps. 102:3, 11.

NOTE.—Realizing that human life is indeed frail and of short duration, men should understand the folly of exerting all their energies in the acquisition of material wealth; they should spend their time in preparation for eternity.

"We are now upon the very borders of the eternal world, but it is the purpose of the adversary of souls to lead us to put far off the close of time. Satan will in every conceivable manner assail those who profess to be the commandment-keeping people of God and to be waiting for the second appearing of our Saviour in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. He will lead as many as possible to put off the evil day and become in spirit like the world, imitating its customs. I felt alarmed as I saw that the spirit of the world was controlling the hearts and minds of many who make a high profession of the truth. Selfishness and self-indulgence are cherished by them, but true godliness and sterling integrity are not cultivated."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, p. 306.

8. How will a Christian qualify his plans and decisions? James 4:15.

NOTE.—"James does not mean that the Christian should always speak these words, but that the spirit of submission reflected by them actually should guide every plan.

"The first man . . . neglects God's will for his future in preference for material gain. The second church member realizes the uncertainty of life and endeavors to make the service of God primary in his life. He knows that God has a special plan for him, and that only by adopting that plan will he find true satisfaction. A consistent application of this principle may mean that some of life's best-laid plans will be altered, in order that God's better plan may succeed. This the genuine Christian accepts with joy in the assurance that God controls his life. . . .

"When men submit to the will of God (v. 7) they do well to remember that God's ways are often different from those of men (cf. Isa. 55:8, 9). Consequently, a faithful Christian faces each day with confidence in divine guidance in all his enterprises, whether 'this, or that.'"—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:15.

9. What did Jesus say of His own submission to the will of His Father? John 6:38. Compare Matt. 26:39.

NOTE.—"So utterly was Christ emptied of self that He made no plans for Himself. He accepted God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 208.

Self-glorification Leads to Sin

10. What is characteristic of those who trust in themselves and their own achievements? James 4:16 (first part).

NOTE.—"The way of the world is to begin with pomp and boasting. God's way is to make the day of small things the beginning of the glorious triumph of truth and righteousness."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 595.

11. How does God regard pride in one's own accomplishments? James 4:16 (last part). Compare 1 Cor. 5:6.

NOTE.—"Because it exalts self-sufficiency and fosters presumption, this type of thinking is basically wicked and akin to the spirit of Lucifer."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:16.

12. What is deliberate neglect of known duty called? James 4:17. Compare Matt. 25:24-28; Luke 12:47; John 9:41.

NOTE.—"Deliberate evasion of known duty is forthright rebellion against the will of God. This fact amplifies the difficulty confronting the 'double-minded' man . . . , the pseudoreligious man . . . , the man of dead faith . . . , and the 'earthly' man. . . . All these characteristics of imperfect church members are the result of incomplete commitment to a full performance of the commandments of God. They vacillate between what they know they ought to do and what they personally wish to do . . . , with the result that they 'miss the mark' of unreserved submission to the will of God."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 4:17.

13. How may we, in the turmoil of this life, find satisfaction and peace? Prov. 3:5-8; Isa. 26:3, 4.

NOTE.—"Whatever position in life we may occupy, whatever our business, we must be humble enough to feel our need of help; we must lean implicitly on the teachings of God's Word, acknowledge His providence in all things, and be faithful in pouring out our souls in prayer. Lean to your own understanding, dear brethren, as you make your way through the world, and you will reap sorrow and disappointment. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and He will guide your steps in wisdom, and your interests will be safe for this world and for the next."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 5, page 427.

Questions for Meditation

1. Am I demonstrating a lack of love when I find fault with my brethren?
2. Does my life show that I realize the brevity of this earthly existence?
3. Is it ever excusable to avoid the performance of a known duty?

Lesson 11, for September 14, 1968

Warning Against Improper Acquisition and Use of Wealth

MEMORY VERSE: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33.

STUDY HELPS: "Counsels on Stewardship," pages 20-23, 150-153, 217-244; "Testimonies," Vol. 2, pp. 268-288; Vol. 9, pp. 11-18; "Spiritual Gifts," Vol. 2, pp. 230-238, 245-250; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To increase our awareness of the bewitching danger of materialism and the infinite value of true riches.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Judgments Upon the Greedy Rich

1. The rich admonished to lament. James 5:1; Luke 6:24, 25.
2. Hoarded wealth of no benefit to its owners. James 5:2 (first part).
3. Costly garments ruined, and no source of pride to their wearers. James 5:2 (last part).
4. Jesus' advice on acquiring riches. Matt. 6:19-21.
5. God's counsel to the Laodicean rich. Rev. 3:17, 18.
6. Hoarded wealth testifies against its possessors. James 5:3 (first part).
7. Amassing of wealth in "the last days." James 5:3 (last part).

II. Why Divine Judgment Befalls the Rich

8. Withholding a just wage. James 5:4 (first part).
9. Defrauding of the poor on record in heaven. James 5:4 (last part).
10. Selfish gratification of carnal appetites. James 5:5 (first part).
11. Fate of the greedy. James 5:5 (last part).
12. Wealth used to secure the unjust condemnation of the innocent poor. James 5:6.
13. The certainty of retribution. Rom. 2:4-6; 14:12; Rev. 22:12.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"In this life our possessions are limited, but the great treasure that God offers in His gift to the world, is unlimited. It comprehends every human desire, and goes far beyond our human calculations. In the great day of final decision, when every man shall be judged according to his deeds, every voice of self-justification will be hushed; for it will be seen that in His gift to the human race the Father gave all He had to give, and that they are without excuse who have refused to accept the gracious offering."—*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 21.

Judgments Upon the Greedy Rich

1. Why are the rich told to cry out in distress? James 5:1; Luke 6:24, 25.

NOTE.—"Very few realize the strength of their love for money until the test is brought to bear upon them. Many who profess to be Christ's followers then show that they are unprepared for heaven. Their works testify that they love wealth more than their neighbor or their God. . . .

"The influence of the love of money over the human mind is almost paralyzing. Riches infatuate, and cause many who possess them to act as though they were bereft of reason. . . .

"But many show by their works that they dare not trust the bank of heaven. They choose to trust their means in the earth, rather than to send it before them to heaven. These have a great work to do to overcome covetousness and love of the world. Rich poor men, professing to serve God, are objects of pity. While they profess to know God, in works they deny Him. How great is the darkness of such! They profess faith in the truth, but their works do not correspond with their profession. The love of riches makes men selfish, exacting, and overbearing."—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pages 150, 151.

2. What happens to material blessings that are hoarded, and not used to God's glory? James 5:2 (first part).

NOTE.—The Greek word translated "corrupted" in James 5:2 has the connotation of *rotted* or *spoiled*. If the wealthy landowner stored up the products of his land and allowed them to spoil instead of using them to relieve the sufferings of the poor, they did not benefit him.

"The foolish rich man of Christ's parable had most of his wealth in the products of the soil. . . . These 'riches' are worthless because they foster self-gratification and are acquired at the expense of the personal rights of others (see James 5:4). With all this earthly wealth, the unconverted rich man is 'not rich toward God.' "—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, on James 5:2.

3. What will happen to the large wardrobes of the rich? James 5:2 (last part).

NOTE.—"Let the carnal heart be changed, and it will not be such drudgery, ye cold-hearted professors, to serve God. All that

love of dress and pride of appearance will be gone. The time that you spend standing before the glass preparing the hair to please the eye, should be devoted to prayer and searching of heart. There will be no place for outward adornment in the sanctified heart; but there will be an earnest, anxious seeking for the inward adorning, the Christian graces—the fruits of the Spirit of God. . . .

"Subdue the carnal mind, reform the life, and the poor mortal frame will not be so idolized. If the heart is reformed, it will be seen in the outward appearance. If Christ be in us the hope of glory, we shall discover such matchless charms in Him that the soul will be enamored. It will cleave to Him, choose to love Him, and in admiration of Him, self will be forgotten. Jesus will be magnified and adored, and self abased and humbled."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 1, pp. 162, 163.

4. Why does Jesus admonish us not to strive for earthly wealth, but to lay up treasure in heaven? Matt. 6:19-21.

NOTE.—"Many who profess the truth are growing close and covetous. They need to be alarmed for themselves. They have so much of their treasure upon the earth that their hearts are on their treasure. Much the larger share of their treasure is in this world and but little in heaven; therefore their affections are placed on earthly possessions instead of on the heavenly inheritance."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 1, p. 494.

5. What urgent counsel does God send to those who, in these last days, consider themselves rich and "in need of nothing"? Rev. 3:17, 18.

NOTE.—"The wares of heaven are offered to our churches. Every individual needs to have a decided interest in the invitation of Christ. Brethren and sisters, are your thoughts after this order? 'These sharp, decided words do not mean me; I am in a fairly good condition spiritually, though I may not have all the fervor and zeal that some have. I believe the truth. Those to whom this message belongs may take it. I think some need it.' You who think and reason thus, be assured that you are the very ones to whom this message belongs. While the costly wares of heaven are open before you, draw nigh and buy that which you have lost—the gold of love and faith, and the white raiment which is the righteousness of Christ."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, pp. 964, 965.

6. What does hoarded wealth do against those who hoard it? James 5:3 (first part).

NOTE.—"It is God who gives men power to get wealth, and He has bestowed this ability, not as a means of gratifying self, but as a means of returning to God His own. With this object it is not a sin to acquire means. . . .

"But of what value is untold wealth if it is hoarded in expensive mansions or in bank stocks? What do these weigh in comparison with the salvation of one soul for whom the Son of the infinite God has died?"—*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, pp. 452, 453.

7. When, in the world's history, would men give special attention to the amassing of wealth? James 5:3 (last part).

NOTE.—"In this generation the desire for gain is the absorbing passion. Wealth is often obtained by fraud. There are multitudes struggling with poverty, compelled to labor hard for small wages, unable to secure even the barest necessities of life. Toil and deprivation, with no hope of better things, make their burden heavy. Careworn and oppressed, they know not where to turn for relief. And all this that the rich may support their extravagance or indulge their desire to hoard!"—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 650, 651.

Why Divine Judgment Befalls the Rich

8. What charge does God make against those who neglect prompt payment of their employees? James 5:4 (first part). Compare Lev. 19:13; Jer. 22:13, 14.

NOTE.—"The customs of the world are no criterion for the Christian. He is not to imitate its sharp practices, its overreaching, its extortion. . . . Every wrong done to the children of God is done to Christ Himself in the person of His saints. Every attempt to take advantage of the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another is registered as fraud in the ledger of heaven."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 651, 652.

9. Who takes note of the injustice practiced upon the poor by the selfish rich? James 5:4 (last part). Compare Deut. 24:14, 15.

10. How do the wealthy use the riches they gain by oppressing the poor? James 5:5 (first part).

NOTE.—"The more means we expend in display and self-indulgence, the less we can have to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Every penny used unnecessarily deprives the spender of a precious opportunity of doing good. It is robbing God of the honor and glory which should flow back to Him through the improvement of His entrusted talents."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 352.

11. To what are the greedy rich compared? James 5:5 (last part). Compare 2 Tim. 3:1, 2.

NOTE.—"You have lived on earth in wanton luxury, fattening yourselves like cattle—and the day for slaughter has come." James 5:5, N.E.B.

"The day of reckoning is ahead for all, good or bad. . . . A life nourished on self-gratification is like that of a sheep being fattened for the slaughter (cf. James 5:3). In the OT this phrase is synonymous with 'a day of judgment' (see Jer. 12:3; 25:34)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 5:5.

12. In what perversion of justice have the rich engaged, at the expense of the poor? James 5:6.

NOTE.—"Who reads the warnings given by the fast-fulfilling signs of the times? What impression is made upon worldlings? What change is seen in their attitude? No more than was seen in the attitude of the inhabitants of the Noachian world. Absorbed in worldly business and pleasure, the antediluvians 'knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away.' Matt. 24:39. They had heaven-sent warnings, but they refused to listen. And today the world, utterly regardless of the warning voice of God, is hurrying on to eternal ruin."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, p. 14.

13. How is the righteous judgment of God related to the life of each individual? Rom. 2:4-6; 14:12; Rev. 22:12.

NOTE.—"It is while men are still dwelling upon the earth that the work of investigative judgment takes place in the courts of heaven. The lives of all His professed followers pass in review before God. All are examined according to the record of the books of heaven, and according to his deeds the destiny of each is forever fixed."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 310.

Questions for Meditation

1. Do the interests of the "kingdom of God and His righteousness" always receive my first consideration?

2. After I pay my tithe and give my offerings, do I use the rest of my income to the glory of God?

Patient Endurance and the Coming of Christ

MEMORY VERSE: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10:36, 37.

STUDY HELPS: "Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," pages 18-28 (1943 ed., pp. 34-48; "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 56-61; "Testimonies," Vol. 9, pp. 285-288; "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 506-512; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To find encouragement for remaining faithful under adversity; to fix our gaze not upon the transient experiences of this world, but upon the soon coming of our King.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Patient Endurance in View of Christ's Coming

1. The saints are to endure patiently. James 5:7 (first part).
2. The promise of Christ's return a source of comfort. 1 Thess. 4:16-18.
3. Christ's promise brings confident assurance. John 14:1-3.
4. The second advent, the goal of the Christian hope. Titus 2:13.
5. The husbandman's patience. James 5:7 (second part).

II. The Early and the Latter Rain

6. The latter rain essential to maturing the harvest. James 5:7 (last part).
7. Israel assured of sufficient rainfall. Deut. 11:13-15.
8. The early and the latter rain. Hosea 6:3.
9. The antitypical early rain at Pentecost. Acts 2:1-4, 16-21.
10. We are to ask for the latter rain at the appropriate time. Zech. 10:1.

III. The Patient Endurance of the Saints

11. Patience an outstanding characteristic of the true church in the last days. Rev. 14:12 (first part).
12. Admonition to patience in view of the coming of Christ. James 5:8.
13. Jesus will come when the harvest is ripe. Rev. 14:14-16.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"*It will not be long till we shall see* Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. 'Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.' Heb. 10:35-37. Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the City of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, pp. 287, 288.

Patient Endurance in View of Christ's Coming

1. For how long are believers to endure the unjust adversities of life? James 5:7 (first part).

NOTE.—"The world has become bold in transgression of God's law. Because of His long forebearance, men have trampled upon His authority. They have strengthened one

another in oppression and cruelty toward His heritage, saying, 'How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?' . . . But there is a line beyond which they cannot pass. The time is near when they will have reached the prescribed limit—even now they have almost exceeded the bounds of the long-suffering of God, the limits of His grace, the limits of His mercy. The Lord will interpose to vindicate His own honor, to deliver His people, and to repress the swellings of unrighteousness."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* pages 177, 178.

2. In what does Paul advise believers to find comfort? 1 Thess 4:16-18.

NOTE.—"God designs that His people shall fix their eyes heavenward, looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. While the attention of worldlings is turned to various enterprises, ours should be to the heavens; our faith should reach further and further into the glorious mysteries of the heavenly treasure, drawing the precious, divine rays of light from the heavenly sanctuary to shine in our hearts, as they shine upon the face of Jesus. . . . By watching they become strong; they overcome sloth and selfishness and love of ease. Affliction's fire kindles upon them, and the waiting time seems long. They sometimes grieve, and faith falters; but they rally again, overcome their fears and doubts, and while their eyes are directed heavenward, say to their adversaries: 'I am watching, I am waiting the return of my Lord. I will glory in tribulation, in affliction, in necessities.' "—*Testimonies,* Vol. 2, pp. 194, 195.

3. What promise of Jesus removes all cause for perplexity and anxiety? John 14:1-3.

NOTE.—" 'Jesus has gone to prepare mansions for us. . . . It is these mansions that I am looking to; it is not the earthly mansions here, for erelong they are to be shaken down by the mighty earthquake; but those heavenly mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for the faithful.

" 'We have no home here; we are only pilgrims and strangers, passing to a better country, even a heavenly. Place your mind upon these things, and while you are doing this, Christ will be right by your side. May God help us to win the precious boon of eternal life.' "—*Life Sketches,* pages 293, 294.

4. What is the great objective of the Christian's hope? Titus 2:13.

NOTE.—"The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers. The Saviour's parting promise upon Olivet, that He would come again, lighted up the future for His disciples, filling their hearts with joy and hope that sorrow could not quench nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, 'the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ' was the 'blessed hope.' "—*The Great Controversy,* page 302.

5. By what illustration does James show the need of patiently waiting for God's plan to mature? James 5:7 (second part). Compare Heb. 10:35-37.

NOTE.—"The Christian is to wait with patience for the fruition in his life of the Word of God. Often when we pray for the graces of the Spirit, God works to answer our prayers by placing us in circumstances to develop these fruits; but we do not understand His purpose, and wonder, and are dismayed. Yet none can develop these graces except through the process of growth and fruit bearing. Our part is to receive God's Word and to hold it fast, yielding ourselves fully to its control, and its purpose in us will be accomplished."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 61.

The Early and the Latter Rain

6. For how long must the husbandman exercise patience? James 5:7 (last part).

NOTE.—"There is nothing in the original to justify the insertion of the word *long* before patience, and it is omitted in R.V. and R.S.V. As a matter of fact, the time

between seedtime, or the first appearance of the blade, and harvest was roughly speaking four months (see John 4:35); not a very long period, but fraught with much anxiety in a country which was utterly dependent upon the early and latter rain, the first due soon after sowing and the second when the crop was ripening. The faithful Jew knew, however, that God would be true to His promise that if His people kept His commandments, He would give them 'the first rain and the latter rain' (Deut. 11:14); and the prophet bids the children of Zion be glad and rejoice in the Lord because He caused to come down for them 'the former and the latter rain' (Joel 2:23). So the farmer's patience *for* (R.V. 'over') his land was more in the nature of confident expectancy. His faith in the reliability of God acted as a restraining and controlling influence during what might otherwise have been a time of acute and enervating anxiety. In the same way, the faithful Christian knows that Christ will be true to His promise to come again to His people."—R. V. G. Tasker, *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, The General Epistle of James,* pages 118, 119.

7. What assurance did God give ancient Israel concerning the certainty of the harvest? Deut. 11:13-15.

8. How does Hosea illustrate the coming of the Lord to bless His people? Hosea 6:3.

NOTE.—"The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel. . . .

"The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close."—*The Great Controversy,* pages 611, 612.

9. What prophecy was partially fulfilled at Pentecost? In what condition of heart were the apostles at that time? Acts 2:1-4, 16-21. Compare Joel 2:28, 29.

NOTE.—"God is willing to give us a similar blessing, when we seek for it as earnestly. . . .

"It is with an earnest longing that I look forward to the time when the events of the Day of Pentecost shall be repeated with even greater power than on that occasion. John says, 'I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.' Then, as at the Pentecostal season, the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 6, p. 1055.

10. What should the church do "in the time of the latter rain"? Zech. 10:1.

NOTE.—"The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it. . . .

"Let Christians . . . ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come."—*Evangelism,* page 701. See also *Early Writings,* page 271.

The Patient Endurance of the Saints

11. What outstanding characteristic of the saints in the closing days of the world's history was shown to the revelator? Rev. 14:12 (first part).

12. What reason does James give for exercising steadfast endurance? James 5:8.

NOTE.—"Although Jesus said that no man knows the 'day and hour' of His second advent, He encouraged Christians to understand the times and to 'know' when the advent draws near. . . . Christ admonished His disciples ever to be in readiness for His return, and devout Christians in all ages have treasured the hope that His advent might be near in their day."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 5:8.

13. At what point in the experience of His people will Jesus come to reap the harvest of earth? Rev. 14:14-16. Compare Matt. 13:39.

NOTE.—"The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 506.

"'When the fruit is brought forth, immediately He putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.' Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 69.

Questions for Meditation

1. Do I practice patient endurance in difficult situations?
2. Does my confidence in the certainty of the soon coming of Jesus dispel anxiety from my experience?
3. Am I ready for the latter rain?

Lesson 13, for September 28, 1968

Closing Admonitions

MEMORY VERSE: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James. 5:16.

STUDY HELPS: "The Ministry of Healing," pages 219-233; "Counsels on Health," pages 373-382; "Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," pages 13-18, 29-35 (1943 ed., pp. 29-33, 49-58); "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 125-131; "Steps to Christ," chapter "Confession"; "Testimonies," Vol. 5, pp. 53-62; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To benefit by the valuable instruction in practical godliness found in James 5:9-20.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Learn to Endure Suffering Patiently

1. Do not complain against one another. James 5:9; 4:11.
2. Faithful followers of Christ always suffer. James 5:10; 2 Tim. 3:12.
3. Those who suffer patiently are blessed. James 5:11 (first part).
4. Job's experience an illustration of this blessedness. James 5:11 (last part).
5. A warning against swearing. James 5:12.

II. Pray Always

6. An attitude of confident trust. James 5:13; 1 Thess 5:17.
7. Prayer for the sick. James 5:14, 15.
8. How to unite alienated hearts. James 5:16 (first part); Matt. 5:23, 24.
9. The effectiveness of a righteous man's prayers. James 5:16 (last part).
10. Elijah's prayer for drought. James 5:17; Luke 4:25; 1 Kings 17:1.
11. Elijah's prayer for rain. James 5:18; 1 Kings 18:41-45.
12. Elijah a type of God's messengers in the last days. Mal. 4:5, 6.

III. James's Solicitude for His Brethren

13. The apostle's loving concern for his brethren. James 1:2; 2:1; 3:1, 10; 4:11; 5:7, 10, 12.
14. An appeal to rescue and restore erring brethren. James 5:19, 20.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The concluding portion of James 5 sums up the apostle's portrayal of the successful Christian life. There is instruction concerning simplicity and purity of speech, emphasis on the need for continual communion with heaven in all the experiences of life, and a final appeal to exert the utmost effort on behalf of those who know not the joy of salvation.

"Read the second chapter of James. Practice the truth in your daily life and you will know the work that the Lord has given you to do. Read also the fourth chapter, especially verses 5-12; and chapter 5, especially verses 13-20. These chapters are a dead letter to the larger number of those who claim to be Seventh-day Adventists. I am directed to point you to these scriptures, and to the seventh chapter of Matthew. You need to study every word as for your life."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 125.

Learn to Endure Suffering Patiently

1. What will be the result of blaming others for our troubles? James 5: 9; 4:11.

NOTE.—"To grumble and to find fault is as serious a shortcoming as overt condemnation, and reveals an unloving, contentious spirit. . . .

"James here emphasizes the immediacy of the advent and that the times demand a prepared character to meet the Lord. There is no time for finding fault with others."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 5:9.

2. How have faithful witnesses for Christ always been treated? James 5: 10; 2 Tim. 3:12.

NOTE.—"While slander may blacken the reputation, it cannot stain the character. That is in God's keeping. So long as we do not consent to sin, there is no power, whether human or satanic, that can bring a stain upon the soul. A man whose heart is stayed upon God is just the same in the hour of his most afflicting trials and most discouraging surroundings as when he was in prosperity, when the light and favor of God seemed to be upon him."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* page 32.

3. How are those who suffer patiently to be regarded? James 5:11 (first part). Compare Matt. 5:10-12.

NOTE.—"Constant faithfulness amid the problems of life . . . reveals an undivided loyalty to God and becomes a requisite for eternal life."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on James 5:11.

4. Whose experience is cited as an illustration of the blessing that comes to those who remain loyal under affliction? James 5:11 (last part). Compare Job 42:10-17.

5. What counsel does James give about placing oneself under oath in trivial matters? James 5:12. Compare Matt. 5:33-37.

NOTE.—"Our Saviour did not, however, forbid the use of the judicial oath, in which God is solemnly called to witness that what is said is truth and nothing but the truth. Jesus Himself, at His trial before the Sanhedrin, did not refuse to testify under oath. . . . Had Christ in the Sermon on the Mount condemned the judicial oath, He would at His trial have

reproved the high priest and thus, for the benefit of His followers, have enforced His own teaching. . . .

"These words condemn all those meaningless phrases and expletives that border on profanity. They condemn the deceptive compliments, the evasion of truth, the flattering phrases, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade, that are current in society and in the business world. They teach that no one who tries to appear what he is not, or whose words do not convey the real sentiment of his heart, can be called truthful."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* pages 66-68.

Pray Always

6. What attitude will the true Christian maintain, both in affliction and in prosperity? James 5:13; 1 Thess. 5:17.

7. What counsel is given in regard to prayer for the sick? James 5:14, 15.

NOTE.—"I understand the text in James is to be carried out when a person is sick upon his bed, if he calls for the elders of the church, and they carry out the directions in James, anointing the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, praying over him the prayer of faith. We read, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.'

"It cannot be our duty to call for the elders of the church for every little ailment we have. . . . But the Lord gives us the privilege of seeking Him individually in earnest prayer, or unburdening our souls to Him, keeping nothing from Him who has invited us, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' Oh, how grateful we should be that Jesus is willing and able to bear all our infirmities and strengthen and heal all our diseases if it will be for our good and for His glory."—*Medical Ministry,* pages 16, 17.

8. What course is to be followed when brethren have wronged one another? James 5:16 (first part); Matt. 5:23, 24.

NOTE.—"When one who professes to serve God wrongs or injures a brother, he misrepresents the character of God to that brother, and the wrong must be confessed, he must acknowledge it to be sin, in order to be in harmony with God. . . .

"If matters of difficulty between brethren were not laid open before others, but frankly spoken of between themselves in the spirit of Christian love, how much evil might be prevented! How many roots of bitterness whereby many are defiled would be destroyed, and how closely and tenderly might the followers of Christ be united in His love!"—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* pages 58, 59.

9. How effective is a righteous man's prayer? James 5:16 (last part). Compare Joshua 10:12-14; Dan. 2:17-19, 23.

NOTE.—"He who strives for eloquent language when praying is entirely out of place. The eloquence that God accepts is the earnest, longing cry of the soul which feels that it must have help.

"Long prayers are not essential. Those who labor in the right spirit will pray in the right spirit. He who labors as Christ labored will be in earnest when he prays. And the Word of God assures us, 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.' "—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 939.

10. How effective was Elijah's prayer for drought? James 5:17; Luke 4:25; 1 Kings 17:1.

NOTE.—"His word had locked up the treasures of heaven, and his word only could open them again. . . .

"God always has men to whom He intrusts His message. His Spirit moves upon their hearts, and constrains them to speak. Stimulated by holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they enter upon the performance of their duty without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord has given them. . . .

"The world is full of flatterers and dissemblers who have yielded to the desire to please; but the faithful men, who do not study self-interest, but love their brethren too well to suffer sin upon them, are few indeed."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 2, p. 1034.

11. How did God honor the prayer of Elijah after three and a half years of drought? James 5:18; 1 Kings 18: 41-45.

NOTE.—"I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said, 'Ye let go of the arm of the Lord too soon. Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith. The promises are sure. Believe ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.' . . . If the enemy can lead the desponding to take their eyes off from Jesus, and look to themselves, and dwell upon their own unworthiness, instead of dwelling upon the worthiness of Jesus, His love, His merits, and His great mercy, he will get away their shield of faith and gain his object; they will be exposed to his fiery temptations. The weak should therefore look to Jesus, and believe in Him; they then exercise faith."—*Early Writings,* page 73.

12. Of what did Elijah and his work constitute a type? Mal. 4:5, 6.

NOTE.—"Today, in the spirit and power of Elias and of John the Baptist, messengers of God's appointment are calling the attention of a judgment-bound world to the solemn events soon to take place in connection with the closing hours of probation and the appearance of Christ Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. . . .

"In these final hours of probation for the sons of men, when the fate of every soul is so soon to be decided forever, the Lord of heaven and earth expects His church to arouse to action as never before. Those who have been made free in Christ through a knowledge of precious truth, are regarded by the Lord Jesus as His chosen ones, favored above all other people on the face of the earth; and He is counting on them to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into marvelous light."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 716.

James's Solicitude for His Brethren

13. Summarize the message of the epistle of James. James 1:2; 2:1; 3:1, 10; 4:11; 5:7, 10, 12.

NOTE.—Throughout his epistle James expresses a tender and anxious solicitude for the spiritual welfare of his brethren. Running through the epistle there is a constant desire that they shall be spared the suffering that comes to those who follow the ways of the unconverted heart.

14. With what earnest invitation does the epistle close? James 5:19, 20. Compare Gal. 6:1, 2.

NOTE.—"Only the love that flows from the heart of Christ can heal. Only he in whom that loves flows, even as the sap in the tree or the blood in the body, can restore the wounded soul.

"Love's agencies have wonderful power, for they are divine. The soft answer that 'turneth away wrath,' the love that 'suffereth long, and is kind,' the charity that 'covereth a multitude of sins' . . . —would we learn the lesson, with what power for healing would our lives be gifted! How life would be transformed, and the earth become a very likeness and foretaste of heaven!"—*Education,* page 114.

Questions for Meditation

1. Am I careful about the purity of my language as one who expects to meet Jesus soon should be?

2. How do I deport myself toward a brother who has incurred my displeasure?

3. Is my heart filled with the same yearning love for lost souls as that which Jesus manifested when here on earth?

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

September 28, 1968

Inter-American Division

The Inter-American Division has been assigned the overflow of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering to be taken on September 28. This offering will be divided equally between Andrews Memorial Hospital in Kingston, Jamaica, and the Adventist Educational Center in Honduras.

In the light of a changing economy, facilities at Andrews Memorial Hospital are now outmoded and inadequate. In order to meet modern medical standards we must abandon the old clinic building and erect a new medical-surgical wing, which will house examining rooms, clinical quarters, a more adequate operating room, and a new delivery room. It will also provide for more bed patients, raising the bed capacity from the present 47 to 125. There is also an urgent need to build a dormitory for the nurses in training.

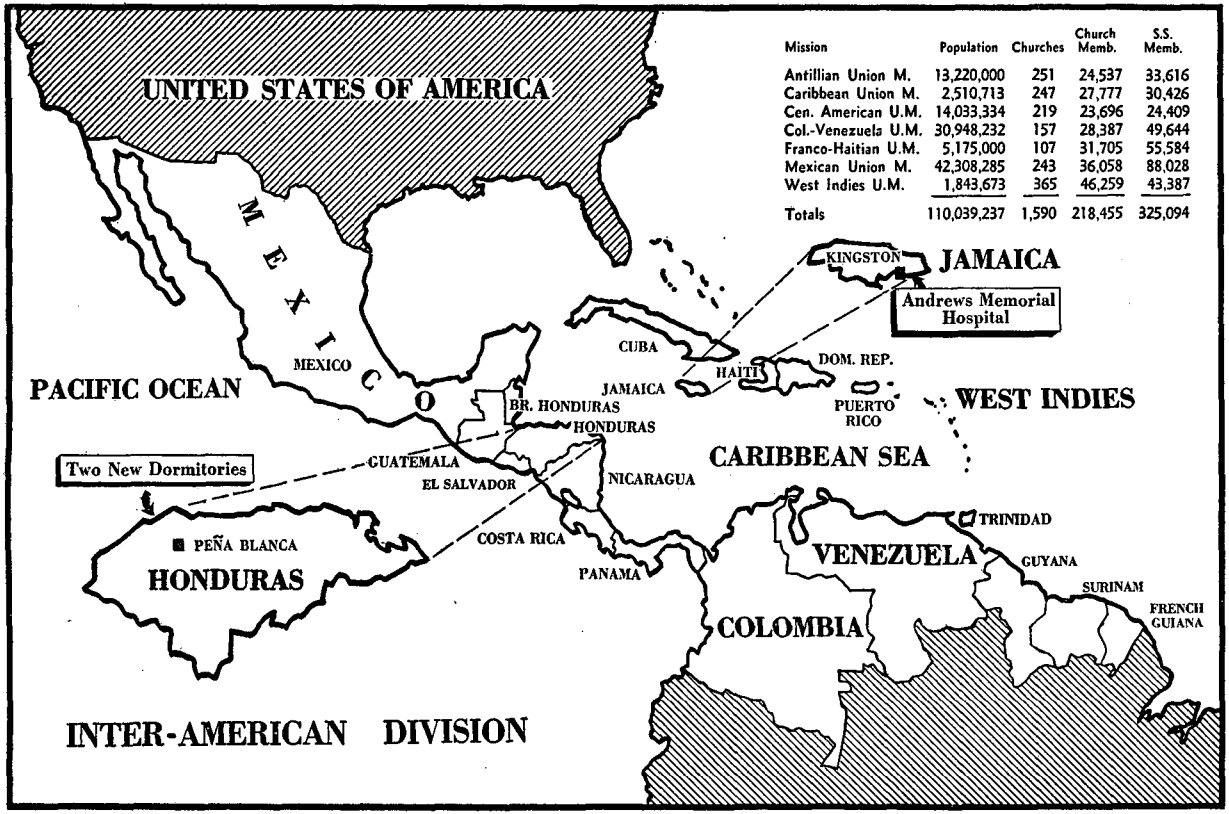
The Adventist Educational Center in Honduras opened its doors in 1965. Previously it was a self-supporting institution started by the late Dr. Joseph L. Dewitt in 1962. Two years later it was turned over to the Honduras Mission as a donation. It is now being sponsored by the Adventist constituency of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, with a total membership of about 13,000. This new boarding school with very modest physical facilities is attracting some of the finest young people in this part of Central America. With 255 acres of ground, the Adventist Educational Center will be able to expand to care for 450 students.

The young people of Central America urge you to give generously for their school at Peña Blanca, and missionary doctors appeal to you to help make Andrews Memorial Hospital a representative institution.

Lessons for the Fourth Quarter of 1968

Sabbath School members who have not received a senior *Lesson Quarterly* for the fourth quarter of 1968 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first lesson. The title of the series is "Lessons From the Lives of Old Testament Prophets." The title of the first lesson is "Abraham, Friend of God—Part I." The memory verse is Hebrews 11:8. The texts to be studied are:

Ques. 1. Gen. 20:7.
Ques. 2. Gen. 11:31; 12:1, 2; Joshua 24:2, 3.
Ques. 3. Gen. 12:4 (first part); Heb. 11:8.
Ques. 4. Gen. 12:4 (last part).
Ques. 5. Gen. 12:5 (middle part).
Ques. 6. Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:4, 18.
Ques. 7. Gen. 18:19; 26:5.
Ques. 8. Gen. 12:10.
Ques. 9. Gen. 12:11-16.
Ques. 10. Gen. 12:17-20.
Ques. 11. Gen. 20:1-5, 13.
Ques. 12. Gen. 13:7-9.
Ques. 13. Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:4.
Ques. 14. Gen. 14:13 (last part).



Mission	Population	Churches	Church Memb.	S.S. Memb.
Antillian Union M.	13,220,000	251	24,537	33,616
Caribbean Union M.	2,510,713	247	27,777	30,426
Cen. American U.M.	14,033,334	219	23,696	24,409
Col.-Venezuela U.M.	30,948,232	157	28,387	49,644
Franco-Haitian U.M.	5,175,000	107	31,705	55,584
Mexican Union M.	42,308,285	243	36,058	88,028
West Indies U.M.	1,843,673	365	46,259	43,387
Totals	110,039,237	1,590	218,455	325,094