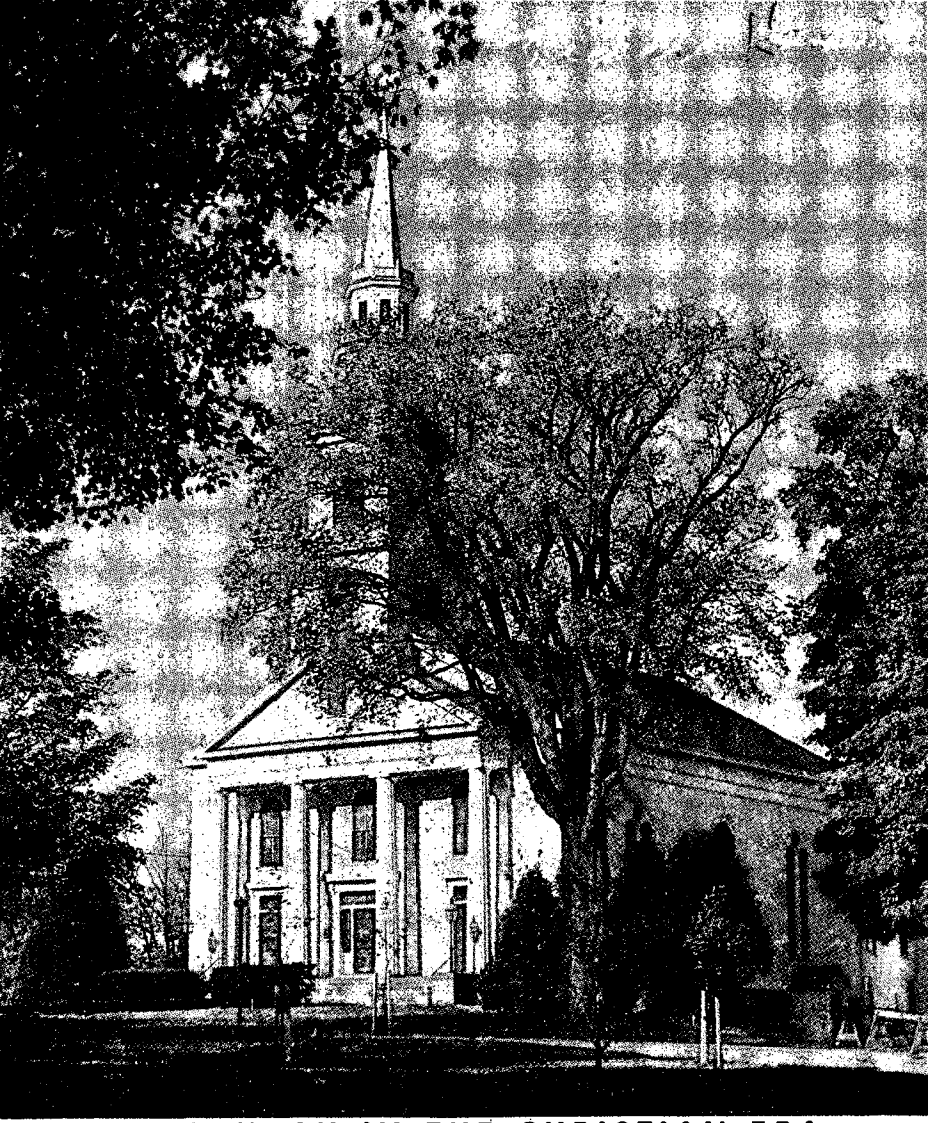

THE CHURCH IN THE CHRISTIAN ERA

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON

Quarterly

Senior Division, No. 282, Fourth Quarter, 1965

Richard Hammill

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. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. 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. What Is the Church?
2. The Purpose and Function of the Church
3. The Divine Leader of the Church
4. Christ's Representative on Earth
5. The Human Leaders of the Church
6. Objectives and Methods of Church Organization
7. Authority and Discipline in the Church
8. The Spiritual Life of Church Members
9. The Ordinances of the Church
10. The Church at Worship
11. God's Plan for Financing Church Activities
12. Unity in Christ
13. The Church in the Last Days

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Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

THE CHURCH IN THE CHRISTIAN ERA

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

"The church is God's fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. . . .

"Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 11, 12.

"Nothing else in this world is so dear to God as His church. Nothing is guarded by Him with such jealous care. Nothing so offends God as an act that injures the influence of those who are doing His service." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, page 42.

"God has a church on earth who are lifting up the downtrodden law, and presenting to the world the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. The church is the depositary of the wealth of the riches of the grace of Christ, and through the church eventually will be made manifest the final and full display of the love of God to the world that is to be lightened with its glory. The prayer of Christ that His church may be one as He was one with His Father will finally be answered. The rich dowry of the Holy Spirit will be given, and through its constant supply to the people of God they will become witnesses in the world of the power of God unto salvation."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 50.

Lesson 1, for October 2, 1965

What Is the Church?

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

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 412-414; "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 15-23; "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 595, 596; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To discover the teaching of the Bible concerning the nature of the church.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-3.	☐
Monday: Questions 4-7.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 8-10; read from study helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Body of Christ

1. Various meanings of the word "church" in the New Testament.
2. Local churches, a part of the universal church. 1 Cor. 1:2.
3. All members make up the body of Christ. Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:12; Rom. 12:4, 5.

II. The Household of God

4. The reconciled enter the household of God. Eph. 2:18, 19.
5. Includes more than human beings. Eph. 3:14, 15; Heb. 12:22-24.
6. The function of angels in the household. Heb. 1:13, 14; Ps. 34:7.
7. God's gracious purpose for human beings. Eph. 1:3-6; Gal. 4:4-6.
8. Membership, possible only through Christ. Eph. 2:12, 13, 16, 18.
9. Man's part in becoming a member. 2 Cor. 6:17, 18; John 1:12.
10. The bond of love unites the family. 1 John 4:7, 10, 11.

III. The Temple of God

11. The church, a temple of God. Eph. 2:21.
12. Jesus, the Cornerstone. Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11.
13. Christians, "living stones" in the temple. 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Cor. 3:16.
14. The Holy Spirit quarries and builds. Eph. 2:22.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The Greek word translated as "church" throughout the New Testament is *ekklēsia*. It was used as anciently as the time of Homer for any regularly called or summoned assembly. Greek dictionaries define it as "an assembly of citizens regularly convened." See Acts 19:32 for this use of the word. Literally, it means "a calling out." The common use of this word among Greeks was as a verb meaning "to hold or to summon an assembly."

When the number of Jews living in Greek-speaking lands became large, before the birth of Christ, the Old Testament was translated into the Greek language, beginning with the third century B.C. In this translation, now commonly called the Septuagint, the word *ekklēsia* was used to translate the Hebrew word *qahal*, which in the Old Testament designates assemblies of Hebrews, and also was used for the entire community of Israel (Deut. 4:10; 9:10; 23:7, 8; Judges 20:2). Thus, when the New Testament was written, the word *ekklēsia* was well-known as a Greek designation for God's people.

The Body of Christ

1. In what various ways is the word "church" used in the New Testament?

ANSWER.—(*a*) Gatherings for worship, 1 Cor. 11:18; 14:4, 28, 35.

(*b*) Of local Christian groups or congregations, as the totality of Christians living in one place, Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:3; and with the name added, Acts 8:1; Rom. 16:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; and of house congregations, Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19. "Church" is not used in the New Testament to designate specifically a building. During the first few centuries of the Christian Era Christians generally were not permitted to erect places of worship; they met in homes or any building they could get that would accommodate them.

(*c*) Of the entire body of Christians, the church universal to which all believers belong, Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 1:22; 5:25, 27, 32; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:23.

2. How does Paul state the fact that a local church is a part of God's universal church 1 Cor. 1:2.

3. What else is the church called? Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:12; Rom. 12:4, 5.

NOTE.—The church is a brotherhood of believers, a spiritual communion, a loving

fellowship of those whom God accepts as sons and daughters, and who, joined to Christ, the Head of the church, are His body, His covenant community. The church may exist in a visible company in Jerusalem, Tokyo, Bombay, Rio de Janeiro, or Centerville. All these are equally the church, for they share in the life of Christ, the Head of the church body; they are founded upon Him and guided by Him. The most essential characteristic of the living church is Jesus Christ's abiding in the minds and hearts of those who have accepted Him as their Saviour, who love Him and one another. It is a life union between Christ and His people, created by the mysterious working of the Holy Spirit.

The Household of God

4. Into what home are those brought who have been reconciled to God? Eph. 2:18, 19.

5. Who else besides God's children on this earth make up the church of God? Eph. 3:14, 15; Heb. 12:22-24.

NOTE.—"The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church. Every heavenly intelligence is interested in the assemblies of the saints who on earth meet to worship God. In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimony of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on earth, and the praise and thanksgiving from the worshipers below is taken up in the heavenly anthem, and praise and rejoicing sound through the heavenly courts because Christ has not died in vain for the fallen sons of Adam. While angels drink from the fountainhead, the saints on earth drink of the pure streams flowing from the throne, the streams that make glad the city of our God. Oh, that we could all realize the nearness of heaven to earth!"—*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, p. 366.

6. What special function or duty in the household of God has been assigned to the angels? Heb. 1:13, 14; Ps. 34:7.

NOTE.—"The Lord gives to every angel his work for this fallen world. Divine help is provided for men and women. . . .

"The angels of God are communicating with and guarding His people, and are pressing back the powers of darkness that they shall not have any control over those who shall be heirs of salvation. Are we working in harmony with the angels? This is the line of communication the Lord has established with the children of men.

"The Lord Jesus has a special work appointed for each of the angelic family." —Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 923.

"When the earthborn children know it not, they have angels of light as their companions. A silent witness guards every soul that lives, seeking to draw that soul to Christ. As long as there is hope, until men resist the Holy Spirit to their eternal ruin, they are guarded by heavenly intelligences."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, pages 366, 367.

"His angels are appointed to watch over us, and if we put ourselves under their guardianship, then in every time of danger they will be at our right hand. When unconsciously we are in danger of exerting a wrong influence, the angels will be by our side, prompting us to a better course, choosing our words for us, and influencing our actions."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* pages 341, 342.

7. Why should Christians be especially grateful to the heavenly Father? Eph. 1:3-6; Gal. 4:4-6.

"Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences. . . .

"God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family might become one with the heavenly family. It was God's purpose to repopulate heaven with the human family, if they would show themselves obedient to His every word."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 1, pp. 1081, 1082.

8. How only can human beings become members of God's household? Eph. 2:12, 13, 16, 18.

9. What is our part in the process of becoming members of God's family? 2 Cor. 6:17, 18; John 1:12.

10. What bond holds the members of God's household together? 1 John 4:7, 10, 11.

The Temple of God

11. What other symbol is used to describe the church? Eph. 2:21.

12. What central position does Jesus Christ have in this temple? Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11.

13. Who are the stones in this temple? 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Cor. 3:16.

14. Who is the heavenly agent in the building of the temple? Eph. 2:22.

NOTE.—"The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. . . .

"If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 52, 53.

"The Holy Spirit is to animate and pervade the whole church, purifying and cementing hearts."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, p. 20.

"They are living stones, quarried out from the world by the truth; and the great Master Builder, the Lord of the temple, is now hewing and polishing them, and fitting them for their respective places in the spiritual temple. When completed, this temple will be perfect in all its parts, the admiration of angels and of men; for its Builder and Maker is God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 2, p. 1029.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Do I appreciate God's graciousness in adopting me into His family?

2. Do I cooperate with the angels as they seek to influence my mind away from evil and toward heavenly things?

3. Do I love the members of God's family among whom I live?

Lesson 2, for October 9, 1965

The Purpose and Function of the Church

MEMORY VERSE: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:20.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 9-16; "Prophets and Kings," pages 259, 260, 713-720; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To seek to learn the purpose for which God established the church, and the major responsibility of each member.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here		Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐	Wednesday: Questions 13, 14; read from study helps.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐	Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Monday: Questions 5, 6; read from study helps.	☐	Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 7-12.	☐		

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. An Agency for Calling Men Back to God

1. Calling out a people for His name. Acts 15:12-17.
2. Ministry of reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5:18, 19.
3. The basic message. 2 Cor. 5:20, 21.
4. The effect of this message. Titus 3:3-7.

II. A Home in Which Believers are Strengthened

5. Salvation a continuing process. Acts 2:41-47.
6. A place for sanctifying and perfecting. Eph. 5:25-27.

III. A Means for Vindicating God and Accomplishing His Work

7. A demonstration to heavenly beings. Eph. 3:10, 11.
8. Witness. Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 3:15.
9. Preaching. Mark 16:15.
10. Teaching. Matt. 28:19, 20.
11. Service. Heb. 6:10; Matt. 25:37-40.
12. Fellowship. 1 John 1:3.

IV. The Church's Resources

13. Gifts of the Spirit. Eph. 4:11, 12.
14. The effect of the gifts. Eph. 4:15, 16.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to 'the principalities and powers in heavenly places,' the final and full display of the love of God."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 9.

An Agency for Calling Men Back to God

1. What was God's objective in sending certain apostles to the Gentiles? Acts 15:12-17.

NOTE.—To the disciples, the representatives of the church, Jesus said, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." John 20:21. Jesus had previously stated His mission: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10. The purpose of the church, therefore, is clear: She exists to help men find their way back to God. "The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 9.

2. What ministry has God assigned to the church? 2 Cor. 5:18, 19.

3. What simple witness must be borne to the unconverted? 2 Cor. 5:20, 21. Compare Col. 1:19-22.

4. What marvelous transformations take place when the church fulfills its ministry of reconciliation for the lost? Titus 3:3-7. Compare Eph. 2:1-6.

A Home in Which Believers Are Strengthened

5. What experience in the early church indicates a ministry for the members as well as for the lost? Acts 2:41-47.

NOTE.—A person who accepts Christ is justified, or forgiven, by faith in Christ. However, he still has weaknesses in his character that need to be rectified. He needs to gain a victory over certain bad habits, to grow in spiritual knowledge and perception, and to develop his talents for Christian service. This work, which the Bible calls sanctification, is a continuous process that results in the believer's becoming more and more like Jesus as time goes by. The church will not prosper unless it provides help for its members in this growing, maturing process.

6. How will Christ prepare a church that is acceptable to Him? Eph. 5:25-27. Compare Eph. 3:16-19.

NOTE.—The church is a God-ordained fellowship in which believers may find warmth, love, encouragement, and spiritual strengthening. The church militant is not a showcase for perfected, sinless saints; it is a household of brotherhood in which sincere men and women may receive the help they need to grow to full Christian maturity. By informing the mind, strengthening the faith, and fanning the energies to greater zeal, the church performs a redemptive function for its own members and helps to restore in them the image and mind of Christ. The church, therefore, is both a means through which God works to extend the gospel invitation to all men and a home into which they are brought to be perfected.

A Means for Vindicating God's Program and Accomplishing His Work

7. To whom is the church a demonstration of the wisdom and the righteousness of God? Eph. 3:10, 11. Compare Eph. 1:6; 2:6, 7.

NOTE.—"But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 68.

8. As witnesses for Christ, what should church members be ready to do at all times? Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 3:15.

9. What is another mission of the church? Mark 16:15.

NOTE.—This scripture contains two of the most vital words having to do with the work of the church. The first of these, "preach," is from the Greek word meaning to publish abroad, to proclaim, to announce openly and publicly. The apostle Paul stated the central place of the preaching of the gospel in these words, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. 1:21. Down through the centuries multitudes have been won to Christ through this medium, especially when the ministers follow the example of Paul and preach the "unsearchable riches of Christ." Eph. 3:8. The second important word is "gospel," which means, literally, "glad tidings" or "joyful news." No better tidings could be brought to man than that God loves him, that Christ died in his place, and that eternal life in God's kingdom is his for the asking.

10. What other means has God appointed the church for achieving her objective? Matt. 28:19, 20.

NOTE.—The Christian faith speaks to man's heart; it also speaks to his mind. To grow in grace, to mature spiritually, a follower of the Lord should have a correct understanding of the Christian faith, and this he acquires by study and by being taught. Witnessing and preaching have their rightful place; so does the instruction of those who become followers of the Master. The word "doctrine" that occurs so often in the New Testament is but the noun form of the verb "teach" (see Acts 2:42; 5:28; 13:12), which Jesus used when He commanded the church to "Go, . . . teach all nations: . . . *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Every Adventist church, no matter how small, must accept its responsibility to help in this task of teaching the Christian faith to all nations. No person or congregation adequately confesses Christ if content to confess Him only in the church congregation, or in the immediate neighborhood.

11. What is a fourth channel of activity the followers of the Lord may use to help the church accomplish its purposes? Heb. 6:10; Matt. 25:37-40. Compare Rev. 2:19.

NOTE.—The Greek word *diakonia* is sometimes translated in the English Bible as ministry, minister, service, serving, et cetera. From the same root word we get "deacon." It may all be summed up in the term "Christian service"; and this is one of the means through which God works to reach the hearts of people. True religion, the Bible tells us, is expressed by visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, providing clothing for the destitute, and helping those who cannot help themselves. Those who testify to their Lord by such services are following in a Heaven-appointed channel of church activity.

12. In what other way may the church fulfill her function of winning men to the Lord and strengthening them in the faith? 1 John 1:3.

NOTE.—Through the fellowship of Christian brethren, through the intercommunication of mind with mind, by means of discourse on their mutual faith and hope, by means of the effective influence of the personality touching the life of another, by joint participation in Christian service and in proper recreation some men are drawn to Christ for the first time, and others who already acknowledge Him are strengthened. The power of Christian fellowship as a means for accomplishing the church's mission is not fully appreciated.

The Church's Resources

13. In addition to the personal witness that all genuine Christians bear, what special provision did God make to enable the church to fulfill its purpose? Eph. 4:11, 12.

NOTE.—The diversity of gifts of the Spirit to the church indicates that it is to accomplish its task by a variety of means. Evangelism consists of anything the church may do that results in winning men and women to Christ and establishing them in the faith.

"Christ has given to His church ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. He has bestowed upon His people capabilities and blessings that they may represent His own sufficiency. The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depositary, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 680.

14. When each member of the body of Christ uses the graces and gifts that the Spirit gives him, what takes place in the church? Eph. 4:15, 16.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Did I witness to anyone this week concerning my faith in Christ?
2. Am I accepting my responsibility as an ambassador for God? and do I represent Him properly?
3. Have I ever urged anyone to be reconciled to God? How much longer am I going to wait to do this?

Lesson 3, for October 16, 1965

The Divine Leader of the Church

MEMORY VERSE: "And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence." Col. 1:18.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 152-154, 175, 176; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To examine anew the evidences of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the church, and to consider the relationship that should exist between Him and the members of His body.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here		Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐	Tuesday: Questions 6-9.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-3.	☐	Wednesday: Questions 10-12.	☐
Monday: Questions 4, 5.	☐	Thursday: Read study helps.	☐
		Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Christ, the Head of the Church

1. The supreme Leader. Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18.
2. Body subject to the head. Eph. 5:23 (last part), 24, first part.
3. By right of purchase with His own blood. Eph. 5:25 (last part); Phil. 2:5-11.
4. His exalted name. Phil. 2:9.
5. His headquarters. Heb. 8:1, 2.

II. Christ's Intercessory Work as Head of the Church

6. Leads men to repentance. Acts 5:30, 31.
7. Offers forgiveness and reconciliation. Heb. 2:17; 7:25; 9:24, 28.
8. Provides a means of access to God. Heb. 10:19-22; Eph. 2:18; Rom. 5:2.
9. Presents our prayers to the Father. John 16:23, 24, 26.

III. Christ's Administrative Activities

10. Commander-in-chief of the armies of heaven. Joshua 5:13-15.
11. Directs the work of the angels. Ps. 91:11, 12.
12. Guides the churches. Rev. 1:13, 16, 20.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Christ did not tell His disciples that their work would be easy. He showed them the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against them. . . . But they would not be left to fight alone. He assured them that He would be with them; and that if they would go forth in faith, they should move under the shield of Omnipotence. He bade them be brave and strong; for One mightier than angels would be in their ranks—the General of the armies of heaven. He made full provision for the prosecution of their work and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. . . . I will be with you always, helping you to perform your duty, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, sustaining you, giving you success in speaking words that shall draw the attention of others to heaven." —*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 29.

The Head of the Church

1. Who is the head of the church, and what does the term "head" signify? Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18.

NOTE.—"God has never given a hint in His Word that He has appointed any man to be the head of the church."—*The Great Controversy,* page 51.

"Since His ascension Christ has carried forward His work on the earth by chosen ambassadors, through whom He speaks to the children of men and ministers to their needs. The great Head of the church superintends His work through the instrumentality of men ordained by God to act as His representatives."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 360.

"Consider, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord has a people, a chosen people, His church, to be His own, His own fortress, which He holds in a sin-stricken, revolted world; and He intended that no authority should be known in it, no laws be acknowledged by it, but His own."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 16.

2. What does the term "body" signify in regard to the relationship of the church to Christ? Eph. 5:23 (last part), 24, first part.

NOTE.—"The church is built upon Christ as its foundation; it is to obey Christ as its head. It is not to depend upon man, or be controlled by man."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 414.

3. Why was Jesus given the position as head of the church? Eph. 5:25 (last part); Phil. 2:5-11. Compare Acts 20:28.

4. How does God exalt Christ's name? Phil. 2:9.

5. Where is the headquarters of the church of Christ? Heb. 8:1, 2.

Christ's Intercessory Work as Head of the Church

6. How is Christ seeking to draw men to Himself? Acts 5:30, 31. Compare Rom. 2:4.

NOTE.—"God calls every man to repentance, yet man cannot even repent unless the Holy Spirit works upon his heart. But the Lord wants no man to wait until he thinks he has repented before he takes steps toward Jesus. The Saviour is continually drawing men to repentance; they need only to submit to be drawn, and their hearts will be melted in penitence."—*Counsels to Teachers,* pages 365, 366.

7. As man's high priest, what is Christ doing for the sins of the people? Heb. 2:17; 7:25; 9:24, 28.

NOTE.—"The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which decended on the Day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement."—*Early Writings,* page 260.

8. What assurances do we have that Christ's ministry for His believers is effective? Heb. 10:19-22; Eph. 2:18; Rom. 5:2.

NOTE.—"Jehovah did not deem the plan of salvation complete while invested only with His love. He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed in our nature. As our Intercessor, Christ's office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. He intercedes in behalf of those who receive Him. With His own blood He has paid their ransom. By virtue of His merits He gives them power to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. And the Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ by receiving and welcoming Christ's friends as His friends." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, p. 177.

9. To whom should Christians pray, and in whose name? What part does Christ have in the prayers of His followers? John 16:23, 24, 26.

NOTE.—"In Christ's name our petitions ascend to the Father. He intercedes in our behalf, and the Father lays open all the treasures of His grace for our appropriation, for us to enjoy and impart to others. . . .

"Yes, Christ has become the medium of prayer between man and God. He has also become the medium of blessing between God and man."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, p. 178.

Christ's Administrative Activities

10. What title anciently applied to Christ helps to explain the work He is doing as head of the church? Joshua 5:13-15. Compare Matt. 26:53.

NOTE.—"Oh, that all could behold our precious Saviour as He is, *a Saviour.* Let His hand draw aside the veil which conceals His glory from our eyes. It shows Him in His high and holy place. What do we see? Our Saviour, not in a position of silence and inactivity. He is surrounded with heavenly intelligences, cherubim, and seraphim, ten thousand times ten thousand of angels.

"All these heavenly beings have one object above all others, in which they are intensely interested—His church in a world of corruption. All these armies are in the service of the Prince of heaven, exalting the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. They are working for Christ under His commission, to save to the uttermost all who look to Him and believe in Him. These heavenly intelligences are speeding on their mission, doing for Christ that which Herod and Pilate did against Him. They confederate together to uphold the honor and glory of God. They are united in a holy alliance, in a grand and sublime unity of purpose, to show forth the power and compassion and love and glory of the crucified and risen Saviour.

"In their service, these armies of heaven illustrate what the church of God should be. Christ is working in their behalf in the heavenly courts, sending out His messengers to all parts of the globe, to the assistance of every suffering one who looks to Him for relief, for spiritual life and knowledge."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, pp. 967, 968.

11. Whom does Christ, as head of the church, send on special missions in behalf of His church? Ps. 91:11, 12. Compare Acts 12:6-11; Rev. 7:1-3.

NOTE.—"Angels are belting the world, refusing Satan his claims to supremacy, made because of the vast multitude of his adherents. We hear not the voices, we see not with the natural sight the work of these angels, but their hands are linked about the world, and with sleepless vigilance they are keeping the armies of Satan at bay till the sealing of God's people shall be accomplished."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 967.

12. How does John the revelator picture Christ's relationship with His church? Rev. 1:13, 16, 20.

NOTE.—"He [Jesus] is in constant communication with His people. He knows their true state. He observes their order, their piety, their devotion. Although He is high priest and mediator in the sanctuary above, yet He is represented as walking up and down in the midst of His churches on the earth. With untiring wakefulness and unremitting vigilance, He watches to see whether the light of any of His sentinels is burning dim or going out. If the candlesticks were left to mere human care, the flickering flame would languish and die; but He is the true watchman in the Lord's house, the true warden of the temple courts. His continued care and sustaining grace are the source of life and light." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 586.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Do I carefully listen to and obey the instructions of the Lord of the church?

2. Am I thankful not only for the sacrifice of Christ in my behalf but also for His constant ministry, which results in the development of the church and in rich spiritual blessings for me?

Lesson 4, for October 23, 1965

Christ's Representative on Earth

MEMORY VERSE: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me." John 15:26.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 47-56; "The Desire of Ages," pages 669-672; "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 506-512; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To understand better the Holy Spirit's function in the spiritual growth and work of the church.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5-8.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 9-11; read from study helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 12-14; read from study helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Coming of the Holy Spirit

1. Jesus' promise. John 14:16-18. 16:7; Luke 24:49.
2. Pentecost—the promise fulfilled. Acts 2:1-4, 32, 33.

II. The Holy Spirit's Function in Spiritual Growth

3. Testifies of Christ. John 15:26; 16:14.

4. Brings conviction and repentance. John 16:8.
5. Effects transformation of life. John 3:5-8; Titus 3:5.
6. Strengthens spiritually, and produces fruit. Eph. 3:16; Gal. 5:22, 23.
7. Teacher of truth. John 14:26; 16:13.
8. Unseen, but actually present. John 14:17.

III. The Holy Spirit as Director of Redemptive Activities

9. Satan's opposition to spiritual regeneration. Eph. 6:11, 12.
10. Sources of help in this battle. 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:17.
11. Guide in the affairs of men that affect the church. Ezek. 1:12, 16, 19, 21.
12. Directs the church in soul winning. Acts 10:19, 20; 16:6, 7; 8:26-29.
13. Endows the church with spiritual gifts. 1 Cor. 12:8-11; Eph. 4:8-12.
14. A plea to the church: Heed the voice of the Spirit. Rev. 2:7, 11, 17.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. . . . It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 671.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

1. Whom did Jesus promise to send to the church as His representative? John 14:16-18; 16:7; Luke 24:49.

NOTE.—"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high." —*The Desire of Ages,* page 669.

2. What signalized the enthronement of Christ as head of the church, and the commissioning of the Holy Spirit as His representative on earth? Acts 2:1-4, 32, 33.

NOTE.—"Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit decended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to

His followers as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 38, 39.

The Holy Spirit's Function in Spiritual Growth

3. How did Jesus summarize the work of the Holy Spirit? John 15:26; 16:14.

NOTE.—"The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures." —*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 52.

4. How does the Holy Spirit proceed in His efforts to persuade men to accept Christ as their Saviour? John 16:8.

5. What does the Holy Spirit do for the person who surrenders himself to God? John 3:5-8; Titus 3:5.

6. What will the Holy Spirit do for the born-again Christian? Eph. 3:16; Gal. 5:22, 23.

7. What special commission was given to the Holy Spirit in teaching? John 14:26; 16:13.

NOTE.—Three times Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of truth." John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13. All truth is a unit. Scientific truth will not conflict with spiritual truth, and vice versa. If anything is absolutely true, it will never contradict anything else that is true. While the Holy Spirit is primarily a teacher of spiritual truth, He will guide the inquiring mind that is searching for any kind of truth. Those who are followers of Christ should be in the vanguard of the search for truth.

8. Why do many men of the world not receive the Holy Spirit? John 14:17.

NOTE.—Because men cannot measure the Holy Spirit by their scientific instrumentation, many deny His existence. The Holy Spirit seeks to make His presence felt upon all men; but He is not subject to man's control, to experiment with, contain, or measure His power. God is too great to be put on trial by man, on man's terms.

The Holy Spirit as Director of Redemptive Activity

9. What powers attempt to interfere with and to nullify the redemptive activity of God? Eph. 6:11, 12.

10. Where may the Christian find help in his battle against evil? 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:17.

NOTE.—"He [Jesus] shows His followers the conflicts they must meet; He reveals the character and plan of the battle. . . . They are to contend with supernatural forces, but they are assured of supernatural help. All the intelligences of heaven are in this army. And more than angels are in the ranks. The Holy Spirit, the representative of the Captain of the Lord's host, comes down to direct the battle."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 352.

11. What part does the Holy Spirit have in world affairs that affect God's people? Ezek. 1:12, 16, 19, 21.

NOTE.—"The wheellike complications that appeared to the prophet to be involved in such confusion were under the guidance of an infinite hand. The Spirit of God, revealed to him as moving and directing these wheels, brought harmony out of confusion; so the whole world was under His control. Myriads of glorified beings were ready at His word to overrule the power and policy of evil men, and bring good to His faithful ones."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 5, p. 752.

12. What indicates that the Holy Spirit directs and guides the church and its workers in seeking the lost? Acts 10:19, 20; 16:6, 7; 8:26-29.

NOTE.—"No truth is more clearly taught in the Bible than that God by His Holy Spirit especially directs His servants on earth in the great movements for the carrying forward of the work of salvation. Men are instruments in the hand of God, employed by Him to accomplish His purposes of grace and mercy."—*The Great Controversy,* page 343.

13. To qualify the church to do its work, with what gifts does the Spirit endue the believers? 1 Cor. 12:8-11; Eph. 4:8-12.

14. What oft-repeated plea does God urgently address to His churches? Rev. 2:7, 11, 17.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Do I grieve the Holy Spirit by refusing to allow Him to exercise His regenerating power in certain areas of my life?

2. Do I sometimes try to direct the Holy Spirit, instead of allowing Him to direct me?

3. Am I at times so spiritually blind that I fail to recognize the Holy Spirit at work in my own heart or in the hearts of those among whom I live and work?

Lesson 5, for October 30, 1965

The Human Leaders of the Church

MEMORY VERSE: "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. 4:11, 12.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 87-96, 159-165, 594; "S.D.A. Bible Dictionary," articles "Bishop," "Deacon," and "Elder."

STUDY AIM: To learn more about God's plan for the human leadership of His church on earth.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5-9.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 10-12.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 13, 14; read from study helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. God's Spiritual Gifts to the Church

1. The gifts named. 1 Cor. 12:28, 8-10.
2. The purpose of the gifts. 1 Cor. 12:11, 12, 25; Eph. 4:12, 13.

II. Spiritual Gifts That Qualify for Leadership

3. General leadership positions. Eph. 4:11.
4. Administrators. 1 Cor. 12:28.
5. Administrative leaders are called elders. 1 Tim. 5:17.
6. Elders are also called bishops. Titus 1:5-7.
7. Deacons. 1 Tim. 3:8, 13.

III. Requisite Qualifications for Officers

8. For elders. 1 Tim. 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9.
9. For deacons. 1 Tim. 3:8-13.

IV. Choosing and Accrediting Leaders

10. Methods of choosing. Acts 6:1-7; 14:23.
11. Ordination and its significance. Acts 13:3; 1 Tim. 4:14.
12. Leaders to discharge their obligation diligently. James 5:10; Titus 2:7.
13. The church to esteem its leaders. 1 Tim. 1:12; 1 Peter 5:1-4.
14. Leaders to serve thankfully, willingly, humbly. 1 Thess. 5:12, 13; 2 Tim. 4:1, 2.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The vital importance of good leadership for the church is evident from the fact that Jesus began His church by selecting and training leaders. "With the calling of John and Andrew and Simon, of Philip and Nathanael, began the foundation of the Christian church."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 141.

Moreover, "It was at the ordination of the Twelve that the first step was taken in the organization of the church that after Christ's departure was to carry on His work on the earth."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 18.

In order to equip men for spiritual work, the Holy Spirit gives them spiritual gifts, "dividing to every man severally as He will." 1 Cor. 12:11. All Christians receive some gift of the Spirit to enable them to have a part in extending the kingdom of God; but certain believers are endued with Spirit-given special qualities, which, though they seem to be natural to the individual, are appropriated by the Spirit, increased in quantity, and sanctified for God's use.

"As His representatives among men, Christ does not choose angels who have never fallen, but human beings, men of like passions with those they seek to save. Christ took upon Himself humanity, that He might reach humanity."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 296.

"We have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us." 2 Cor. 4:7, R.S.V.

God's Spiritual Gifts to the Church

1. What spiritual gifts does the Holy Spirit place in the church? 1 Cor. 12:28, 8-10.

2. For what purpose are these gifts bestowed? How long are they to remain in the church? 1 Cor. 12:11, 12, 25; Eph. 4:12, 13.

Spiritual Gifts That Qualify for Leadership

3. For what positions of leadership in the church do the gifts of the Spirit qualify men? Eph. 4:11.

NOTE.—"Apostle" is a word of Greek derivation and means "one sent forth"; as the name indicates, apostles were men sent forth by the church on great preaching missions.

There is no greater position in life than that of spiritual leadership, by means of which the gospel is preached and taught, sinners are confronted with the claims of God, souls are saved from sin, and the weak are made strong. Persons possessing and excercising these gifts—apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, teachers—may or may not hold elective administrative offices in the church. They are the consecrated Christians who magnify the gift God has given them by bearing a witness that leads men to accept Christ and to become strong in the faith.

4. Which spiritual gift qualifies a person for administrative responsibilities in the church? 1 Cor. 12:28.

NOTE.—Instead of "governments," the Revised Standard Version reads "administrators." The word Paul used here means to steer, to act as helmsman, to guide. In any fellowship or organization there is a great need for persons having administrative abilities to help the group organize for its work, to counsel, to lay plans, to direct, to maintain order, to prevent confusion, and to serve as chairmen and as public functionaries representing the group.

5. In New Testament times, what were men called who were chosen to be administrative as well as spiritual leaders in the churches? 1 Tim. 5:17.

NOTE.—The term "elder" arose from the fact that in the ancient East only men who had attained a long maturity could command the respect necessary to be chosen by the people to represent them. In the Old Testament, elders made up the ruling tribunal in Israel. See Ex. 4:29; Judges 8:14. They were generally the elected representatives of the people. In the time of Jesus, the rulers of the synagogues were called elders, as were also certain members of the Sanhedrin. It was only natural, therefore, that the early Christians used this title for the men whom they chose as chairmen of their meetings, as the principal administrating officers and representatives of the church. See 1 Peter 5:1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1.

6. By what other name were the elders called? Titus 1:5-7.

NOTE.—It is evident from Titus 1:5-7 that elders were also called bishops. "Bishop" comes from a Greek word meaning "overseer," "superintendent," or, in an extended sense, "president." This is shown in Acts 20:17, 28, where the elders of Ephesus are admonished to take heed to the flock "over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you *overseers,*" which is the identical Greek word elsewhere translated as "bishop." From the qualifications required of bishops, it is evident that they were the administrative as well as the spiritual leaders of the churches. 1 Tim. 3:2-5. The term "elder" evidently was the title of the office, while the name "bishop" (overseer) indicated the function of the office.

7. What other officers are mentioned as functioning in the early church? 1 Tim. 3:8, 13.

NOTE.—"Deacon" is a transliteration of the Greek word *diakonos,* which means a waiter, servant, minister, helper. Both Jesus and Paul used this word of themselves. See Matt. 20:28; Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 3:5; Eph. 3:7. Paul used the term somewhat as an equivalent of our word "minister" today, although the office early came to include supervision of church property, finances, caring for the poor, visiting the sick, as well as preaching the Word. The seven men elected by the church at Jerusalem to fulfill these functions were undoubtedly deacons, although the Bible does not explicitly call them such. See Acts 6:1-6, and *The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 89, 90.

Requisite Qualifications for Church Officers

8. What are the Bible requisites for elders (or bishops)? 1 Tim. 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9.

9. What are the requisites for a deacon? 1 Tim. 3:8-13.

Choosing and Accrediting Leaders

10. How were the elders and deacons chosen in the early church? Acts 6:1-7; 14:23.

NOTE.—"The church accordingly selected seven men full of faith and the wisdom of the Spirit of God, to attend to the business pertaining to the cause."—*The Story of Redemption,* page 260.

11. How does the church accredit or ordain the ones chosen to be leaders in the preaching of the Word? Acts 13:3; 1 Tim. 4:14.

NOTE.—"Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 161, 162.

12. When the church calls a person to devote his life to its service, how should he respond? James 5:10; Titus 2:7.

13. How is the church to regard its leaders and all who are utilizing the spiritual gifts granted them? 1 Tim. 1:12; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

14. What should the church expect from the leaders? 1 Thess. 5:12, 13; 2 Tim. 4:1, 2.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Do I regard the officers in my church as God-appointed?

2. Recognizing that God has to use "earthen vessels," will I criticize the leaders He has chosen to have the oversight of the church?

3. Be sure to read page 594 in *The Acts of the Apostles.*

Lesson 6, for November 6, 1965

Objectives and Methods of Church Organization

MEMORY VERSE: "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2:21.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 188-200; "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 24-32; "Gospel Workers," pages 481-490; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To study the Biblical principles of church organization, and to see how those principles are applied in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-5.	☐
Monday: Questions 6-8; begin reading study helps.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 9, 10; read further from study helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-13.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Organization in the New Testament Church

1. A general church council was called. Acts 15:1, 2, 6.
2. The council adopted general policies. Acts 15:22-29.
3. The churches abode by the council's decision. Acts 15:30, 31; 16:4, 5.
4. Members were added and dropped. Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; Matt. 18:17.
5. Other indications of organization. (See answer to question.)

II. Organization Exists to Expedite the Church's Work

6. God desires order in His work. 1 Cor. 14:33, 40.
7. Organization makes use of specialized abilities. 1 Cor. 12:14-17.
8. The folly of noncooperation. 1 Cor. 12:18-21.
9. A fundamental principle of cooperation. 1 Peter 5:5.
10. United effort accomplishes more. Eph. 4:16.

III. Kind of Organization

11. The organization, an orderly growth. Eph. 2:21, first part.
12. The organization must be democratic. Acts 1:21-23; 6:3-5.
13. Our denominational organization, based on the local church.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Christ would have His followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another, esteeming others better than themselves. Union and confidence are essential to the prosperity of the church. If each member of the church feels at liberty to move independently of the others, taking his own peculiar course, how can the church be in any safety in the hour of danger and peril? Th prosperity and very existence of a church depend upon the prompt, united action and mutual confidence of its members."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, p. 445.

Organization in the New Testament Church

1. When the unity of the local church was threatened by serious division of opinion over a certain doctrine, what steps did the leaders of the local church take to solve the problem? Acts 15:1, 2, 6.

2. What steps did the apostles and elders take to meet the problem and

convey the decision to the church? Acts 15:22-29.

3. In what spirit did the churches receive the decision, and with what result? Acts 15:30, 31; 16:4, 5.

4. What indications are there that local churches in New Testament times had definite memberships? Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; Matt. 18:17.

NOTE.—The fact that churches added members and dropped members indicates that there must have been organized churches with definite memberships.

5. What intimations are there that local churches developed ties with one another?

ANSWER.— (*a*) Churches in widely scattered countries had officers bearing the same names, and apparently with commonly accepted qualifications. Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 5:17; James 5:14.

(*b*) There were geographical groups of churches. Gal. 1:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8:1; 9:2.

(*c*) On occasion these groups of churches joined in electing special delegates to accompany Paul (2 Cor. 8:19; Acts 20:4) and interchanged letters they received from the apostle. Col. 4:16.

(*d*) Members were given letters of commendation. Rom. 16:1, 2; 1 Cor. 16:3; 2 Cor. 8:19.

(*e*) Pastors were transferred from one church to another. 1 Tim. 1:3. Compare 2 Tim. 4:9, 10, 12; Titus 1:5.

(*f*) Local churches had organized welfare plans with rules concerning who was eligible for relief. 1 Tim. 5:9, 16; 1 Cor. 16:1-5; Rom. 15:25, 26.

NOTE.—As in the formative stage of any group, there was doubtless some variety of organization among the early Christian churches, with uniformity developing as the years passed. "Later in the history of the early church, when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, the organization of the church was further perfected, so that order and harmonious action might be maintained."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 91, 92.

Organization Exists to Expedite the Church's Work

6. What instruction does God give us concerning order and wise planning in His church? 1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

NOTE.—"Christ designs that heaven's order, heaven's plan of government, heaven's divine harmony, shall be represented in His church on earth."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 680.

"While it is true that the Lord guides individuals, it is also true that He is leading out a people, not a few separate individuals here and there, one believing this thing, another that. Angels of God are doing the work committed to their trust. The third angel is leading out and purifying a people, and they should move with him unitedly. . . .

"The world is filled with strife for the supremacy. The spirit of pulling away from our fellow laborers, the spirit of disorganization, is in the very air we breathe. By some, all efforts to establish order are regarded as dangerous—as a restriction of personal liberty, and hence to be feared as popery. They declare that they will not take any man's say-so; that they are amenable to no man. I have been instructed that it is Satan's special effort to lead men to feel that God is pleased to have them choose their own course, independent of the counsel of their brethren." —*Testimonies to Ministers,* pages 488, 489.

7. Why do the members of the church need to be united together in fellowship and service? 1 Cor. 12: 14-17.

NOTE.—Organization makes it possible for persons with specialized abilities to concentrate on tasks they are well qualified

to do. Inasmuch as God's work, like the body, requires specialized functions, when believers unite their efforts they accomplish more than they could working alone.

8. How does the Bible portray the folly of lack of cooperation and united effort as members seek to fulfill the gigantic task of the church? 1 Cor. 12:18-21.

9. What basic attitude is necessary in order to have unity in the church? 1 Peter 5:5.

10. What happens in the church when each member rightly uses his gifts in cooperation with others? Eph. 4:16.

Kind of Organization

11. What words of Scripture show that the organization of the church must be carefully and wisely worked out? Eph. 2:21, first part.

NOTE.—The words "fitly framed" and "fitly joined" (Eph. 4:16) indicate that the members of God's church must plan and organize the work in the most efficient manner of which they are capable. "There should be more wise generalship manifested in doing the Lord's work." —*Counsels to Writers and Editors,* page 126.

Good organization is determined by function. Organization is good to the extent that it enables the objective to be fully attained or the task properly performed in the easiest, quickest, and least expensive way, consonant, of course, with respect for the rights and welfare of individuals.

12. What examples in the Bible have led the church to establish a representative type of church organization and administration? Acts 1: 21-23; 6:3-5.

NOTE.—God desires a form of church organization that respects the dignity and judgment of the individual members. God speaks through the minds of many of His followers, and our organization was formed in such a way that the individual may be heard, but the majority rules. As in all large groups, delegates or representatives are chosen by the members to speak for them; but God desires that all members think about His work and plan together for its advancement.

"He [God] does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church—Christ's body—is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in order that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 163.

13. What is the basic unit upon which the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization is founded?

ANSWER.—The local church, the members of which choose one of their own members to serve as the local elder, or presiding officer. Inasmuch as he is not able—nor would it be desirable—to perform or direct all the various projects of the church, other officers are elected to help him; namely, deacons to help with the temporal affairs of the church, Sabbath school superintendent, home missionary leader, young people's leader, et cetera. These officers serve as a committee or church board, acting in behalf of the people, but the elder bears the responsibility of all phases of the church work and heads all the departments.

NOTE.—"Every member of the church has a voice in choosing officers of the church. The church chooses the officers of the state conferences. Delegates chosen by the state conferences choose the officers of

the union conferences, and delegates chosen by the union conferences choose the officers of the General Conference. By this arrangement every conference, every institution, every church, and every individual, either directly or through representatives, has a voice in the election of the men who bear the chief responsibilities in the General Conference."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, pp. 236, 237.

Lesson 7, for November 13, 1965

Authority and Discipline in the Church

MEMORY VERSE: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 410-416, 805, 806; "Gospel Workers," pages 498-503; "Testimonies," Vol. 3, pp. 428-433, 450, 451; Vol. 7, pp. 260-264; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To examine the safeguards God has placed in the church to keep it from dangers within and without, and to discover the responsibility of each member for the spiritual state of the church.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5, 6; read from study helps.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 7-10.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11, 12; read from study helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Authority of the Church

1. Entrusted with the keys of the kingdom. Matt. 16:18, 19.
2. Witnesses of sins forgiven or retained. John 20:22, 23.
3. Discipline for unrepentant sinners. Matt. 18:15, 16; Titus 3:10, 11.
4. Disfellowshiping, a function for the entire congregation. Matt. 18:17.

II. The Purpose of Church Discipline

5. Reclaiming the erring. 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; 1 Tim. 1:20.
6. Preventing pollution of others. 1 Cor. 5:6, 7.

III. The Responsibility of the Church

7. The church must accept responsibility. 1 Cor 5:9-13.
8. Treatment of disfellowshiped members. 2 Cor. 2:6-8.
9. Church members must seek to restore the erring. Gal. 6:1, 2; James 5:20.
10. Responsibility of ministers. 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Ezek. 3:17-19.

IV. The Procedure for Church Discipline

11. Reasons for discipline. 2 Tim. 3:5; Rom. 16:17; Heb. 13:17.
12. Biblical examples. 2 Tim. 2:16-18; Titus 3:9-11; 2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Cor. 5:11, 13.

Introduction

"Many have an idea that they are responsibile to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth. Jesus is the friend of sinners, and His heart is touched with their woe. He has all power, both in heaven and on earth; but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 122.

The Authority of the Church

1. With what words did Jesus delegate to the church the authority to act upon the acceptance of members into the church or their rejection? Matt. 16:18, 19.

NOTE.—"In the presence of God, and all the heavenly intelligences, in the presence of the unseen army of hell, Christ founded His church upon the living Rock. That Rock is Himself,—His own body, for us broken and bruised. Against the church built upon this foundation, the gates of hell shall not prevail. . . .

" 'The keys of the kingdom of heaven' are the words of Christ. All the words of Holy Scripture are His, and are here included. These words have power to open and to shut heaven. They declare the conditions upon which men are received or rejected."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 413, 414.

2. What is the basis for church authority to pass upon the fitness of men to be members of the body of Christ? John 20:22, 23.

NOTE.—"On the church has been conferred the power to act in Christ's stead. It is God's instrumentality for the preservation of order and discipline among His people. To it the Lord has delegated the power to settle all questions respecting its prosperity, purity, and order. Upon it rests the responsibility of excluding from its fellowship those who are unworthy, who by their un-Christlike conduct would bring dishonor on the truth. Whatever the church does that is in accordance with the directions given in God's Word, will be ratified in heaven."—*Gospel Workers,* pages 501, 502.

3. What are the first steps to be taken in dealing with a member who has fallen into sin? Matt. 18:15, 16; Titus 3:10, 11.

NOTE.—"Whatever the character of the offense, this does not change the plan that God has made for the settlement of misunderstandings and personal injuries. Speaking alone and in the Spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault will often remove the difficulty. Go to the erring one, with a heart filled with Christ's love and sympathy, and seek to adjust the matter. Reason with him calmly and quietly. Let no angry words escape your lips. Speak in a way that will appeal to his better judgment. . . .

"For the sake of the peace and unity of the church, feel it a privilege as well as a duty to do this. . . .

"No church officer should advise, no committee should recommend, nor should any church vote, that the name of a wrongdoer shall be removed from the church books, until the instruction given by Christ has been faithfully followed." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 7, pp. 261, 262.

4. In what group only is authority vested for disfellowshiping church members? Matt. 18:17.

NOTE.—" 'And if he shall neglect to hear them,' what then shall be done? Shall a few persons in a board meeting take upon themselves the responsibility of disfellowshiping the erring one? 'If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto *the church.*' . . .

[Matt. 18:17.] Let the church take action in regard to its members."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 7, p. 262.

"Matters of grave import come up for settlement by the church. God's ministers, ordained by Him as guides of His people, after doing their part are to submit the whole matter to the church, that there may be unity in the decision made."—*Ibid.,* pp. 263, 264.

Purpose of Church Discipline

5. What is the primary purpose of church discipline? 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; 1 Tim. 1:20.

NOTE.—"When this instruction [given by Christ in Matthew 18:1-18] has been followed, the church has cleared herself before God. The evil must then be made to appear as it is, and must be removed, that it may not become more and more widespread. The health and purity of the church must be preserved, that she may stand before God unsullied, clad in the robes of Christ's righteousness."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 7, pp. 262, 263.

6. What other function does church discipline achieve? 1 Cor. 5:6, 7.

NOTE.—"Sin and sinners in the church must be promptly dealt with, that others may not be contaminated. Truth and purity require that we make more thorough work to cleanse the camp from Achans. Let those in responsible positions not suffer sin in a brother. Show him that he must either put away his sins or be separated from the church."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 5, p. 147.

The Responsibility of the Church

7. How did the apostle Paul admonish the Corinthian church to arouse and deal with an erring member? 1 Cor. 5:9-13.

NOTE.—"But on the church in its organized capacity He places a responsibility for the individual members. Toward those who fall into sin, the church has a duty, to warn, to instruct, and if possible to restore. . . . Deal faithfully with wrongdoing. Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbath breaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. 'They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' . . . If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God's Word is pronounced upon them in heaven. In choosing to sin; they disown Christ; the church must show that she does not sanction their deeds, or she herself dishonors her Lord. She must say about sin what God says about it. She must deal with it as God directs, and her action is ratified in heaven. He who despises the authority of the church despises the authority of Christ Himself."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 805, 806.

8. How should members that have been disfellowshiped be treated? 2 Cor. 2:6-8.

9. Who should assume responsibility for erring Christians, and what end should they seek to achieve? Gal. 6:1, 2; James 5:20.

NOTE.—"If the erring one repents and submits to Christ's discipline, he is to be given another trial. And even if he does not repent, even if he stands outside the church, God's servants still have a work to do for him. They are to seek earnestly to win him to repentance. And, however aggravated may have been his offense, if he yields to the striving of the Holy Spirit and, by confessing and forsaking his sin, gives evidence of repentance, he is to be forgiven and welcomed to the fold again. His brethren are to encourage him in the right way, treating him as they would wish to be treated were they in his place, considering themselves lest they also be tempted."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 7, p. 263.

10. What special responsibility do ministers bear toward the erring? 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Ezek. 3:17-19.

NOTE.—"Men appointed of God have been chosen to watch with jealous care, with vigilant perseverance, that the church may not be overthrown by the evil devices of Satan, but that she shall stand in the world to promote the glory of God among men."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 53.

The Procedure for Church Discipline

11. Give three reasons for which the church should discipline its members.

ANSWER: (*a*) Denial of the Spirit of Christ. 2 Tim. 3:5.

(*b*) Denial of the doctrines taught by the church. Rom. 16:17.

(*c*) Rejection of the authority of the church. Heb. 13:17.

NOTE.—"Among the grievous sins for which members shall be subject to church discipline are the following:

"1. Denial of faith in the fundamentals of the gospel and in the cardinal doctrines of the church or teaching doctrines contrary to the same.

"2. Open violation of the law of God, such as worship of idols, murder, adultery, fornication, stealing, profanity, Sabbath breaking, willful and habitual falsehood, and the remarriage of a divorced person, except of the innocent party in a divorce for adultery.

"3. Fraud or willful misrepresentation in business.

"4. Disorderly conduct which brings reproach upon the cause.

"5. Persistent refusal to recognize properly constituted church authority or to submit to the order and discipline of the church.

"6. The use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages.

"7. The use of tobacco or addiction to narcotic drugs."—*Church Manual,* issued by General Conference of S.D.A., 1963 ed., pp. 224, 225.

12. What types of wrongdoing that warrant withdrawal of fellowship are cited in the Bible? 2 Tim. 2:16-18; Titus 3:9-11; 2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Cor. 5:11, 13.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Does my membership in Christ's church enhance or detract from its purity?

2. If all the members were like me, would the church be better than it is now, or worse?

3. What attitude do I manifest toward church members who are stumbling?

Lesson 8, for November 20, 1965

The Spiritual Life of Church Members

MEMORY VERSE: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18.

STUDY HELPS: "Steps to Christ," chapter "The Work and the Life"; "Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," 1956 ed., pp. 138-152 (1943 ed. pp. 198-218); "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To review the high ideals and aims which God has for the members of His church.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here		Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐	Tuesday: Questions 7-10.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1, 2; read from study helps.	☐	Wednesday: Questions 11-14.	☐
Monday: Questions 3-6.	☐	Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
		Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Living to Glorify God

1. A major objective. 2 Thess. 1:11, 12.
2. How God is glorified. Eph. 1:3, 4, 6; Matt. 5:16.

II. Living for Daily Spiritual Growth

3. Goal to be attained. 2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14.
4. By the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor. 3:18.
5. Depicted in Paul's prayer. Eph. 3:14-19.
6. The high standard. Col. 1:9-11.

III. The Means and Effects of Spiritual Growth

7. Accomplished by the power of God. Phil. 1:10, 11.
8. The mind is transformed. Rom. 12:2.
9. Results in a new man. Eph. 4:21-24.
10. The believer's own part. 1 Peter 2:2; Col. 2:6; Phil. 2:12, 13; 3:13, 14.

IV. Specific Counsel Concerning Daily Living

11. Things to refrain from doing. Eph. 4:25 to 5:4.
12. Love's way. Luke 6:27-31.
13. Admonitions for all. Titus 2:2-7; 3:1-3.
14. Genuine religion. James 1:27.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Concerning the church member's manner of life, the Bible says, "Do all you have to do without grumbling or arguing, so that you may be God's children, blameless, sincere, and wholesome, living in a warped and diseased world, and shining there like lights in a dark place. For you hold in your hands the very word of life." Phil. 2:14-16 (*The New Testament in Modern English,* copyright J. B. Phillips, 1958. Used by permission of the Macmillan Company, New York).

The responsibility of a Christian to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:1, 2) is formidable. Yet we do not draw back in fear, but press forward "boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16.

Living to Glorify God

1. What should be the constant aim of the Christian in endeavoring to live a victorious life? 2 Thess. 1:11, 12.

2. To what kind of life has God called us? What did Jesus urge us to do to glorify God? Eph. 1:4, 6; Matt. 5:16.

NOTE.—"The world will be convinced not so much by what the pulpit teaches as by what the church lives. The preacher announces the theory of the gospel, but the practical piety of the church demonstrates its power."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, p. 260.

Living for Daily Spiritual Growth

3. To what spiritual development should the church member seek to attain? 2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14. Compare Prov. 4:18.

NOTE.—The Greek word here translated "perfecting" means "to bring to a consummation or to a goal, to complete." The work of sanctification, bringing the believer to full spiritual growth and Christian maturity, is a lifelong process and not something accomplished by a single act. The Christian must "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18.

"The germination of the seed [in the parable of Mark 4:26-28] represents the beginning of spiritual life, and the development of the plant is a figure of the development of character. There can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the growth of character. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God's purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be constant advancement."—*Education,* pages 105, 106.

4. To whom are Christians to keep looking as an example, and what result will this have in their lives? 2 Cor. 3:18. Compare Heb. 12:2.

NOTE.—This scripture is translated in the Revised Standard Version as follows: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another." "Men are changed in accordance with what they contemplate."—*Counsels to Teachers,* page 460.

5. What steps in Christian growth did Paul cite in his prayer for the Ephesians? Eph. 3:14-19.

6. To what high standard did the apostle pray that God would bring the Christians in Colossae? Col. 1:9-11.

NOTE.—"The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. It is the knowledge that works transformation of character. This knowledge, received, will recreate the soul in the image of God. It will impart to the whole being a spiritual power that is divine. . . .

"As Jesus was in human nature, so God means His followers to be. In His strength we are to live the life of purity and nobility which the Saviour lived."—*The Ministry of Healing,* pages 425, 426.

The Means and Results of Spiritual Growth

7. Through whose help and power only can the believer grow spiritually? Phil. 1:10, 11. Compare Heb. 13:20, 21.

8. In the process of spiritual renewal, what fundamental change must be effected? Rom. 12:2.

NOTE.—"*Renewing of your mind.* Before conversion, man's power of reason, the faculty for discerning between right and wrong, is under the dominion of bodily impulses. The mind is described as a 'fleshly mind' (Col. 2:18). But at the time of conversion the mind comes under the influence of the Spirit of God. The result is that 'we have the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. 2:13-16). . . . And as the inward man is being transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, so the outward life is being

progressively changed. The sanctification of the mind will reveal itself in a holier way of living, as the character of Christ is more and more perfectly reproduced in the believer."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Rom. 12:2.

9. How does Paul figuratively describe the changed life of the Christian? Eph. 4:21-24.

10. Besides surrendering his will to Christ, what else must the believer do to promote his spiritual growth?

ANSWER.—(*a*) He must feed on the Word of God. 1 Peter 2:2.

(*b*) He must pray for a new spirit and claim the promise. Ps. 51:10; Ezek. 36:26, 27.

(*c*) He must continue living by faith. Heb. 10:22, 23; Col. 2:6.

(*d*) He must obey, to the best of his ability. Phil. 2:12, 13; John 14:15.

(*e*) He must persevere. Luke 13:24; Phil. 3:13, 14.

NOTE.—"Wrongs cannot be righted, nor can reformations in character be made, by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. Sanctification is the work, not of a day, or of a year, but of a lifetime. The struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and heaven, is a lifelong struggle. Without continual effort and constant activity there can be no advancement in the divine life, no attainment of the victor's crown."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, pp. 312, 313.

Specific Counsel Concerning Daily Living

11. What will be put out of the life of a converted person? Eph. 4:25 to 5:4.

12. How does the true Christian treat his enemies and those who impose upon him? Luke 6:27-31.

13. What admonition is given to church members of various age levels? Titus 2:2-7; 3:1-3.

14. How does James sum up the essence of genuine religion? James 1:27.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

"There are those who have known the pardoning love of Christ and who really desire to be children of God, yet they realize that their character is imperfect, their life faulty, and they are ready to doubt whether their hearts have been renewed by the Holy Spirit. To such I would say, Do not draw back in despair. We shall often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because of our shortcomings and mistakes, but we are not to be discouraged. Even if we are overcome by the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No; Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Said the beloved John, 'These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' 1 John 2:1. And do not forget the words of Christ, 'The Father Himself loveth you.' John 16:27. He desires to restore you to Himself, to see His own purity and holiness reflected in you. And if you will but yield yourself to Him, He that hath begun a good work in you will carry it forward to the day of Jesus Christ."—*Steps to Christ,* page 64.

"If we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 668.

Lesson 9, for November 27, 1965

The Ordinances of the Church

MEMORY VERSE: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. 3:27.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 642-661; Ellen G. White Comments, "S.D.A. Bible Commentary," Vol. 5, pp. 1138-1140; Vol. 6, pp. 1074, 1075; "Testimonies," Vol. 6, pp. 91-99.

STUDY AIM: To learn the meaning and relevance of the ordinances of the church.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; learn memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-3; read from study helps.	☐
Monday: Questions 4-7.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 8-10.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-13; read from study helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Baptism—The Portal to the Church

1. Its importance. Matt. 3:13-15; 28:19.
2. Its significance. Rom. 6:3-8; Col. 2:12.
3. The gateway into the church. Acts 2:41, 47.

II. Foot Washing—A Symbol of Service

4. The necessity. Luke 22:24-27.
5. Jesus' action. John 13:4, 5.
6. A new ordinance. John 13:12-17.
7. Its significance. John 13:6-8.

III. The Lord's Supper

8. A reminder of Christ's vicarious death. 1 Cor. 11:23-25.
9. A declaration of faith. 1 Cor. 11:26.
10. Communion with the Lord. 1 Cor. 10:16; John 6:53-57.
11. Fellowship with other Christians. 1 Cor. 10:17.
12. A warning. 1 Cor. 11:27, 29.
13. A personal decision. 1 Cor. 11:28.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, defines the word "ordinance" as "an established rite for the administration of a sacrament; hence, a sacrament, especially the Communion." The same dictionary defines a "sacrament" as follows: "One of certain religious acts, ceremonies, or practices distinguished from all others in Christian rites as having been observed or recognized by Christ and given a certain character by Him." It is in this sense that we use the words "ordinance" and "sacrament" for baptism, foot washing, and the Lord's Supper. The actual acts of baptism, foot washing, and eating the emblematic bread and wine do not carry spiritual value of themselves, because a person may participate in them merely as a form without being spiritually prepared. For such persons no spiritual value is received. But for the person who has by faith, prayer, and obedience entered into

spiritual fellowship with the Lord, the taking part in these symbolic acts may bring a deep spiritual blessing in a manner which we cannot adequately describe in words, and which could not be received in any other way. There is no substitute, no other resource or means, by which to obtain the specific blessing that comes as a result of participating in the ordinances with the right spirit.

Baptism—The Portal to the Church

1. How important did Jesus consider baptism, and how does His own example and practice reinforce His command? Matt. 3:13-15; 28:19. Compare John 4:1.

2. What does the rite of baptism signify? Rom. 6:3-8; Col. 2:12.

3. According to the teaching of the New Testament, into what relationship with the church did baptized persons enter immediately? Acts 2:41, 47.

NOTE.—"Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, page 91.

Foot Washing—A Symbol of Service

4. What spiritual condition among the disciples made necessary the ordinance of foot washing? Luke 22:24-27.

5. What necessary service did Jesus perform for His disciples that one of them should have fulfilled? John 13:4, 5.

6. What words of Jesus show that at the time He performed that necessary service, He introduced a new ordinance for all His followers? John 13:12-17.

NOTE.—The Saviour gave three reasons why all Christians should participate in this new ordinance: (*a*) His command—"Ye . . . ought to wash one another's feet" (verse 14); (*b*) His example (verse 15); and (*c*) His promised blessing to those who obey (verse 17).

"In washing the feet of His disciples, Christ gave evidence that He would do any service, however humble, that would make them heirs with Him of the eternal wealth of heaven's treasure. His disciples, in performing the same rite, pledge themselves in like manner to serve their brethren."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 651.

"The ordinance of feet washing is an ordinance of service. This is the lesson the Lord would have all learn and practice." —Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 5, p. 1138.

"By taking part in the ordinance of feet washing we show that we are willing to perform this act of humility. We are doing the very thing Christ did, but this is not to be talked of as an act of humiliation. It is an act which symbolizes the condition of the mind and heart."—*Ibid.,* p. 1139.

7. What spiritual lessons are there in this ordinance? John 13:6-8.

NOTE.—When a person permits his feet to be washed, he is bearing witness to the fact that he does not consider himself to be perfect, but recognizes that he needs the cleansing power of God, and that he is now seeking, or already has sought, that cleansing from God.

The Lord's Supper

8. What important function does the Lord's Supper fulfill in the spiritual experience of the participant? 1 Cor. 11:23-25.

NOTE.—In order that Christians might regularly be brought to recall the debt they owe to Christ, the Lord's Supper was instituted. As we take the broken piece of bread representing Christ's broken body, or taste the wine symbolizing the blood by which Jesus sealed the new covenant of grace in His death, we cannot fail to bring into full remembrance the cross of Calvary and its implications for us. As we partake in solemn awe, we again see things in true perspective.

9. To what do we testify when we partake of the Lord's Supper? 1 Cor. 11:26.

NOTE.—The Greek word which Paul used that is here translated "shew" in the King James Version, really means, and is regularly rendered, "proclaim," "declare" (1 Cor. 2:1), or "preach" (1 Cor. 9:14; Acts 13:5, 38). The apostle is saying that as Christians eat the emblematic bread and drink the wine they are making a public declaration of their faith in the death of Christ as an effective, vicarious atonement for their sins, and in His second coming.

10. What other fundamental witness is given by participation in the Lord's Supper? 1 Cor. 10:16; John 6:53-57.

NOTE.—"Eating of the body, and drinking of the blood, of Christ, not merely at the sacramental service, but daily partaking of the bread of life to satisfy the soul's hunger, would be receiving His Word and doing His will."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 5, page 1140.

11. What does participation in the Lord's Supper teach us concerning our relationships with fellow Christians? 1 Cor. 10:17.

NOTE.—"This is an allusion to the fact that the Communion bread is broken into many pieces, which are eaten by the believers; and as all the pieces come from the same loaf, so all the believers who partake of the Communion service are united in Him whose broken body is thus typified by the broken bread. By partaking together of this ordinance, Christians show publicly that they are united and belong to one great family, whose head is Christ."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on 1 Cor. 10:17.

12. What warning do the Scriptures give to those who partake of the Lord's Supper when they are consciously violating the law of God? 1 Cor. 11:27, 29.

13. Upon whom does the responsibility rest for the decision to participate in the Lord's Supper? 1 Cor. 11:28. Compare 1 Cor. 5:11-13.

NOTE.—"Christ's example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. 1 Cor. 5:11. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat?" —*The Desire of Ages,* page 656.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Am I willing to do any service that the Lord asks me to perform? and for anyone?

2. Have I sought for the deeper meaning of the Communion services, or do I thoughtlessly avoid participation, with the careless observation that I derive no benefit from them?

3. Do I seek real communion with my Lord through feeding daily and deeply on His Word and through prayer?

Lesson 10, for December 4, 1965

The Church at Worship

MEMORY VERSE: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Ps. 122:1.

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies," Vol. 5, pp. 491-500, 607-609; Vol. 6, pp. 174, 175; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To recognize the values to be received from regular attendance at the worship services of the church, and to understand the contribution the worshiper is to make to such services.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; learn memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5-8.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 9, 10; read from study helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Purpose of the Church Service

1. For worship. Ps. 99:9; 95:6.
2. For mutual encouragement. Heb. 10:24, 25.
3. For instruction. Luke 4:17-21.
4. For prayer. Isa. 56:7; Matt. 21:13.

II. Necessary Elements of Worship

5. A sensing of God's presence. Matt. 18:20; Ps. 84:1, 2.
6. A proper spirit. John 4:23, 24.
7. Praise and thanksgiving. Ps. 107:1, 2; 135:1-3; 150:1, 2.
8. Confession and prayer for forgiveness. Ps. 51:1-3, 12.

III. Some Results of Worship

9. Dedication of one's self for service. Isa. 6:8.
10. Desire to worship again. Ps. 122:1; 42:1, 2.

IV. Conducting the Worship Service

11. Sabbath worship. Luke 4:16, 31.
12. With order and decorum. 1 Cor. 14:33, 40; Ps. 96:9.
13. The conduct of the worshipers. Eccl. 5:1, 2; Neh. 8:6; Ps. 89:7.
14. Ways of expressing praise. 2 Chron. 29:30; Ps. 98:5, 6; 105:1, 2; 107:1, 2; 96:1, 2; 150:3-5.

THE LESSON

Introduction

In the Hebrew sanctuary God came to meet with His people, manifesting Himself to them in the Shekinah. In the Christian church Christ is present in the midst of His worshiping people, for He promised, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." The worship service is of great importance in the spiritual life of a Christian, for it is the setting in which we meet Christ, who unites our minds and affections to God the Father and to our

brethren. In the worship experience God communicates and mediates to us His saving, sanctifying grace and His richest blessings. Through instruction from the Word, through public witness by means of the ordinances, through prayer and worship, these blessings are imparted to us.

Purpose of the Church Service

1. What important purpose for religious assemblies is explicitly stated in the Word of God? Ps. 99:9; 95:6.

NOTE.—In the Hebrew language in which the Old Testament was written the word we translate into English as "worship" literally means "to bow down." The word used by New Testament writers meant practically the same, namely, "to get down on one's knees before." The meaning of our English word "worship" is indicated by its Anglo-Saxon form, "worth-ship," that is, reverence paid to an object of supreme worth. To the Christian, all that is of supreme worth and value centers in our holy, omnipotent Creator, before whom we kneel in awe and reverent worship.

2. What are Christians exhorted to do? Heb. 10:24, 25.

NOTE.—"We sustain a loss when we neglect the privilege of associating together to strengthen and encourage one another in the service of God. The truths of His Word lose their vividness and importance in our minds. Our hearts cease to be enlightened and aroused by their sanctifying influence, and we decline in spirituality. In our association as Christians we lose much by lack of sympathy with one another. He who shuts himself up to himself is not filling the position that God designed he should."—*Steps to Christ,* page 101.

3. In harmony with the example set by Jesus, what is to have a prominent place in the Sabbath worship service? Luke 4:17-21.

4. What function to be fulfilled in the church is indicated by the name given in the Bible for the house of God? Isa. 56:7; Matt. 21:13.

Necessary Elements of Worship

5. Whom may the worshiper confidently expect to meet in the church service? Matt. 18:20; Ps. 84:1, 2.

NOTE.—Worship services are to be conducted in such a way as to bring every worshiper into the presence of God. Unless we have a sense of the holiness of God and of His mysterious presence, whatever we do at church is not really worship. When true worshipers come to church, they do so because they want to place themselves in the presence of their holy God. The absolute holiness of God renders His presence both fearful and alluring. It is fearful because in God's sinless presence we become aware of our sinfulness and creatureliness. With Isaiah, we feel like crying, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Isa. 6:5. Aware of our great distance from God, we pray fervently, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and we bow down and worship. But God's presence is also alluring. We are drawn to Him because we sense that He is our only source of help, and our hearts rejoice when we obtain from Him mercy, forgiveness, and cleansing.

6. In what attitude are worshipers to come before God? John 4:23, 24.

NOTE.—"The evil of formal worship cannot be too strongly depicted, but no words can properly set forth the deep blessedness of genuine worship."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, page 143.

God gave men His Word in order that they might worship Him in truth. This is important; but equally important is the spirit that men bring with them when they worship. Jesus spoke these words (John 4:23, 24) to the woman of Samaria

who wanted Him to settle the old argument concerning whether Jerusalem or Samaria was the place in which God desired His people to worship. Jesus answered that the place was not the important factor in worship. God can be worshiped anywhere. The object of our worship does not need a roof or walls; but inasmuch as the worshipers on this earth do need both to protect them from the elements and to give them privacy as they worship, the roof and the walls should be constructed and appointed in such a way as to aid in the act of worship—both functionally and as a means to exalt the spirit and engender an attitude of worship.

7. What is one of the most important components of worship? Ps. 107:1, 2; 135:1-3; 150:1, 2.

8. What other kind of prayer besides praise and thanksgiving is also acceptable to God in worship? Ps. 51:1-3, 12.

Some Results of Worship

9. What attitude of dedication does genuine worship generate? Isa. 6:8.

NOTE.—The renewing power of worship adds to our spiritual strength; it makes us more like our Lord; it deepens our commitment for Christian service. To realize this, one need but consider what happens to those who regularly neglect the worship assemblies of the church.

10. How does a person who enters fully into the worship experience feel relative to attendance at divine services? Ps. 122:1; 42:1, 2.

Conducting the Worship Service

11. On what day of the week did Jesus assemble with His disciples and His community for worship? Luke 4:16, 31. Compare 1 John 2:6.

NOTE.—"We shall follow the Lamb of God in the courts above only if we follow Him here. Following Him in heaven depends on our keeping His commandments now. We are not to follow Christ fitfully or capriciously, only when it is for our advantage."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 978.

12. What counsel do the Scriptures give concerning the order and conduct of church services? 1 Cor. 14:33, 40; Ps. 96:9.

13. How are worshipers to conduct themselves in the house of God? Eccl. 5:1, 2; Neh. 8:6; Ps. 89:7.

14. Name four distinct ways in which praise and thanksgiving can be expressed in the worship service. 2 Chron. 29:30; Ps. 98:5, 6; 105:1, 2; 107:1, 2; 96:1, 2; 150:3-5.

NOTE.—"As a part of religious service, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer." —*Education,* page 168.

"Music forms a part of God's worship in the courts above, and we should endeavor, in our songs of praise, to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 594.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. When I attend church, do I consciously and purposefully seek to meet God?

2. Do I try to keep my mind in a spirit of worship while I am in the house of God?

3. If I do not enjoy the church service, is it because I need to confess something and make it right?

God's Plan for Financing Church Activities

MEMORY VERSE: "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." 1 Chron. 29:14.

STUDY HELPS: "Counsels on Stewardship," pages 65-103; "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 335-345; "Testimonies," Vol. 2, pages 573-575; Vol. 3, pages 381-408; Vol. 9, pages 245-251; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To examine God's plan for financing His work and man's responsibility as God's steward of material possessions.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1, 2; read from study helps.	☐
Monday: Questions 3-6.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 7-12.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 13, 14; read from study helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Giving Is Necessary to Fulfill the Gospel Commission

1. Workers must be sent. Rom. 10:13-15.
2. Workers are to be supported by the church. 1 Cor. 9:7, 11, 13, 14.

II. Giving Is Necessary for Our Own Good

3. An acknowledgment of God's ownership and our stewardship. Ps. 24:1; 1 Chron. 29:14.
4. Results in spiritual blessing. Acts 20:35.
5. A proof of sincerity and love. 2 Cor. 8:1-8.
6. An impetus toward self-dedication. Matt. 6:21.

III. God's Plan for Church Finance

7. God reserves one tenth. Lev. 27:30, 32; Prov. 3:9.
8. To be brought to the church's treasury. Mal. 3:10, first part; Num. 18:21.
9. Freewill offerings, also suggested. 1 Chron. 16:29; 2 Cor. 9:7.
10. Based on proportionate participation. 2 Cor. 8:13, 14.
11. Failure to participate, regarded as robbery. Mal. 3:8, 9.
12. Cheerful participation becomes an act of worship. Deut. 26:10; 2 Chron. 29:29.

IV. Promises to Those Who Follow God's Plan

13. Spiritual and material prosperity. Mal. 3:10, 11; Prov. 3:9, 10.
14. A rewarding life. 2 Cor. 9:6; Prov. 11:24, 25.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness and encourages liberality and benevolence. It should not be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God in His providence is calling His people out from their limited sphere of action, to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral darkness is covering the world. Many of God's people are in danger of being ensnared by worldliness and covetousness. They should understand that it is His mercy that multiplies the demands for their means. Objects that call benevolence into action must be placed before them, or they cannot pattern after the character of the great Exemplar."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, pages 254, 255.

Giving Is Necessary to Fulfill the Gospel Commission

1. What must the church do in order to carry out the command of Jesus to preach the gospel in all the world? Rom. 10:13-15.

2. What responsibility does the church have toward those whom she sends forth to lead out in her work? 1 Cor. 9:7, 11, 13, 14. Compare Luke 10:7.

NOTE.—God expects every church member to witness for his Lord and to participate actively and personally in the church's activities. However, it is vital that some persons devote full time to planning and leading out in the work of the church. Such persons cannot do justice to their responsibilities unless provision is made by the church for their living expenses and for the facilities they need with which to do their work. The Bible plainly teaches that all church members have a responsibility to give of their means to support those whom they have chosen to serve as their representatives.

Giving Is Necessary for Our Own Good

3. What does the Christian acknowledge when he makes gifts to God and His work? Ps. 24:1; 1 Chron. 29:14. Compare Deut. 8:18; Haggai 2:8.

4. What do those receive who give to help others? Acts 20:35.

NOTE.—"Unselfish liberality threw the early church into a transport of joy; for the believers knew that their efforts were helping to send the gospel message to those in darkness. Their benevolence testified that they had not received the grace of God in vain. . . .

"Spiritual prosperity is closely bound up with Christian liberality. The followers of Christ should rejoice in the privilege of revealing in their lives the beneficence of their Redeemer. As they give to the Lord they have the assurance that their treasure is going before them to the heavenly courts."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 344, 345.

5. What did Paul tell the Corinthians that giving to help the poor believers in Jerusalem would prove? 2 Cor. 8:1-8.

6. What effect does giving of one's means for God's work have upon the giver? Matt. 6:21. Compare 2 Cor. 8:5.

NOTE.—"In every effort to benefit others, we benefit ourselves. He who gives money or time for spreading the gospel enlists his own interest and prayers for the work, and for the souls to be reached through it; his affections go out to others, and he is stimulated to greater devotion to God, that he may be enabled to do them the greatest

good."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* page 90.

"Acts of generosity and benevolence were designed by God to keep the hearts of the children of men tender and sympathetic, and to encourage in them an interest and affection for one another. . . . The law of tithing was founded upon an enduring principle and was designed to be a blessing to man:"—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, p. 547.

God's Plan for Church Finance

7. What percent of man's income does God claim as holy unto Himself, and upon what basis is this percentage to be computed? Lev. 27:30, 32; Prov. 3:9.

NOTE.—The word "tithe" is an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning "a tenth part." The Hebrew word which is translated "tithe" simply means "a tenth." It is not left with each person to determine the basic proportion of his income that he will give to satisfy the command of God. The Lord specifically claims a tenth of one's increase as His own. The giving of anything less than a full tenth is not tithing.

"In determining the proportion to be given to the cause of God, be sure to exceed, rather than fall short, of the requirements of duty. Consider for whom the offering is to be made. This recollection will put covetousness to flight. Only consider the great love wherewith Christ has loved us, and our richest offerings will seem unworthy of His acceptance. When Christ is the object of our affections, those who have received His pardoning love will not stop to calculate the value of the alabaster box of precious ointment."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, p. 485.

8. Where is the tithe to be brought and for whom is it to be reserved? Mal. 3:10, first part; Num. 18:21. Compare Neh. 13:12, 13.

NOTE.—"The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be brought into His treasury to be used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work. For a long time the Lord has been robbed because there are those who do not realize that the tithe is God's reserved portion.

"Some have been dissatisfied and have said; 'I will not longer pay my tithe, for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work.' But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? Make your complaint, plainly and openly, in the right spirit, to the proper ones. Send in your petitions for things to be adjusted and set in order; but do not withdraw from the work of God, and prove unfaithful, because others are not doing right."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, p. 249.

9. In addition to the tithe, what are we asked to give for the support of His work? 1 Chron. 16:29; 2 Cor. 9:7.

NOTE.—Freewill offerings are used to add to the tithe for the support of the ministry and also for the erection of houses of worship (Ex. 35:5, 21, 29; 1 Chron. 29:9), and for special projects and services that could not otherwise be provided to hasten forward the Lord's work. (For details of a highly organized campaign for freewill offerings, conceived and directed by the apostle Paul among all Christian churches in order to give financial assistance to Christians in Judea who were in dire need because of Jewish persecutions, see 1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 8:1-24; 9:1-8.)

10. Why is God's plan for financing His work superior to any other? 2 Cor. 8:13, 14.

NOTE.—Tithing equalizes financial responsibility in that the person with the largest income pays the largest amount of tithe. As the following scriptures indicate, freewill offerings are also predicated on proportionate giving: "Every man shall give as he is able," Deut. 16:17. "They gave after their ability," Ezra 2:69. "As God hath prospered him," 1 Cor. 16:2. "By an equality," 2 Cor. 8:14. God asks proportionate responsibility from the higher

privileged. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Luke 12:48. There is a sort of surtax in the moral as well as in the financial realm.

11. What serious charge does God bring against those who refuse to participate in His plan of church finance? Mal. 3:8, 9.

12. With what is the act of giving usually associated in the Bible? Deut. 26:10; 2 Chron. 29:29.

Promises to Those Who Follow God's Plan

13. What definite promise is made to those who follow God's plan of stewardship? Mal. 3:10, 11; Prov. 3:9, 10.

NOTE.—The major blessings that come from faithfully returning tithes and offerings to God are in the spiritual realm. Such blessings—firm faith in God, confidence in God and in our brethren, peace in our hearts, a clear conscience, the respect of our peers, a good family—are of far more worth even than good crops, a steady job, or a prospering business.

14. What promise does God give to those who honor Him with their substance? 2 Cor. 9:6; Prov. 11:24, 25.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

"As the Giver of every blessing, God claims a certain portion of all we possess. This is His provision to sustain the preaching of the gospel. And by making this return to God, we are to show our appreciation of His gifts. But if we withhold from Him that which is His own, how can we claim His blessing? If we are unfaithful stewards of earthly things, how can we expect Him to entrust us with the things of heaven? It may be that here is the secret of unanswered prayer."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 144.

Lesson 12, for December 18, 1965

Unity in Christ

MEMORY VERSE: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another." Rom. 12:5.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 162-165; "Testimonies" Vol. 3, pp. 444-451; Vol. 8, pp. 239-243; Vol. 9, pp. 144-146, 257-261; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To seek to understand the importance of unity in the church and what attitudes of church members make for unity.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; learn memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5-7; read from study helps.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 8-10.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Fountainhead of Unity

1. One body of Christ. Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12.
2. Communion with one Christ. 1 Cor. 10:16, 17.
3. Baptized and taught by one Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:13.
4. One hope, one faith, one mission. Eph. 4:4-6, 11-13.

II. Interrelationships of Members of the Body

5. All submit to the Head. Eph. 5:22-24.
6. Cooperation of all the parts. Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19.
7. God sent Paul to Ananias to receive instruction. Acts 9:6, 10, 11, 15-20.
8. Spiritual gifts preserve doctrinal purity. Eph. 4:11, 14, 15.
9. Unity of the Spirit to be kept. Eph. 4:1-3.
10. Christians to be sympathetic, helpful. 1 Cor. 12:24-26; Phil. 2:1-5.

III. Appeal and Prayer for Unity

11. Paul's fervid appeal for unity. 1 Cor. 1:10, 11.
12. "Is Christ divided?" 1 Cor. 1:13, first part.
13. Jesus prays for the unity of His followers. John 17:20, 21.
14. Result of unity in the church. John 17:23.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Oh, how Satan would rejoice if he could succeed in his efforts to get in among this people and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings and to refute claims not endorsed by the Word of God! We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of organization and order that has been built up by wise, careful labor. License must not be given to disorderly elements that desire to control the work at this time."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 9, pp. 257, 258.

"As we approach the last crisis, it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities. . . . At such a time as this let them not be found at variance with one another or with any of the Lord's workers. Amidst the general discord let there be one place where harmony and unity exist because the Bible is made the guide of life. Let the people of God feel that a responsibility rests upon them to build up His instrumentalities."—*Ibid.,* Vol. 7, p. 182.

The Fountainhead of Unity

1. What Biblical metaphor sets forth the essential unity of the church? Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12.

NOTE.—God calls the church the body of Christ because Christ dwells within each true believer. Gal. 2:20. The essence of the church is the life of Christ imparted to each member by the Holy Spirit. Genuine believers are one body because of their common possession of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. How does communion with Christ bring one into fellowship with other Christians? 1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

3. What is another powerful factor contributing to unity among believers? 1 Cor. 12:13.

NOTE.—The Holy Spirit informs the Christian's mind, guiding him into all

truth and witnessing to him of the will of God as expressed in the Bible. Inasmuch as the Holy Spirit does not teach one believer contrary to that which He teaches another, the work of the Spirit creates unity of faith, belief, and aspiration.

4. In addition to worshiping God, communing with Christ, and drinking of the Spirit, what else do Christians have in common that engenders unity? Eph. 4:4-6, 11-13.

NOTE.—The unity we need is first of all a spiritual unity. It has been truly said that attempts to force unity end only in an illusion of outer unity, for the true unity rests upon a common faith, hope, and mission. Given such inner spiritual unity, the outward manifestation will become apparent in the institutional aspects of the church; for these are but concrete earthly and temporary expressions of the church's heart.

Interrelationships of Members of the Body

5. How should members of the church relate themselves to Christ? Eph. 5:22-24. Compare Eph. 1:22, 23.

6. How does the Bible indicate the fact that Christ communicates with members through the instrumentality of other members? Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19.

NOTE.—The word translated as "joint" in Ephesians 4:16 also means "connection," "contact," and the phrase has been translated "compacted through every contact of the supply." The "supply" is the directing intelligence and vital power supplied by Christ, the head of the church. This supply, the Bible says, is sent throughout the body of Christ by a succession of contacts, so that every part of the body shares in the direction, spiritual nourishment, and power which Christ gives; also every part is a channel that passes on the "supply" to other parts of the body.

7. How does Paul's experience at the time of his conversion reveal God's plan to use members of the church to save sinners? Acts 9:6, 10, 11, 15-20.

NOTE.—"The Redeemer of the world does not sanction experience and exercise in religious matters independent of His organized and acknowledged church, where He has a church.

"Many have the idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His acknowledged followers in the world. But this is condemned by Jesus in His teachings and in the examples, the facts, which He has given for our instruction. Here was Paul, one whom Christ was to fit for a most important work, one who was to be a chosen vessel unto Him, brought directly into the presence of Christ; yet He does not teach him the lessons of truth. He arrests his course and convicts him; and when he asks, 'What wilt Thou have me to do?' the Saviour does not tell him directly, but places him in connection with His church. They will tell thee what thou must do. . . . He directs Saul to the church, thus acknowledging the power that He has invested in it as a channel of light to the world. It is Christ's organized body upon the earth, and respect is required to be paid to His ordinances. In the case of Saul, Ananias represents Christ, and he also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth who are appointed to act in Christ's stead."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, pp. 432, 433.

8. What is one of the main functions to be performed for the church by those to whom God has given spiritual gifts? Eph. 4:11, 14, 15.

NOTE.—"The Word of God does not give license for one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church. If there were no church dis-

cipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, p. 428.

"God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 3, p. 446.

9. What Christian attitudes did Paul recommend in order to preserve the unity of the church? Eph. 4:1-3.

NOTE.—"The religion of Christ does not require us to lose our identity of character, but merely to adapt ourselves, in some measure, to the feelings and ways of others. Many people may be brought together in a unity of religious faith whose opinions, habits, and tastes in temporal matters are not in harmony; but if they have the love of Christ glowing in their bosoms, and are looking forward to the same heaven as their eternal home, they may have the sweetest and most intelligent communion together, and a unity the most wonderful." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, p. 65.

10. How are Christians to care for and to feel toward one another? 1 Cor. 12:24-26; Phil. 2:1-5. Compare Ps. 133:1.

Appeal and Prayer for Unity

11. What fervid appeal did the apostle Paul make for unity in the church at Corinth? 1 Cor. 1:10, 11.

12. In an attempt to impress upon believers the disastrous effects of division in the church, what question did the apostle ask? 1 Cor. 1:13, first part.

NOTE.—Paul's question demands a negative answer. Christ cannot be divided. Therefore it is impossible for the true church of Christ, His body, to be divided in its inner, spiritual life; for the indivisible life of Christ is shared by His genuine followers. The inescapable conclusion is that those who attempt to divide the church tear themselves loose from the body of Christ and are no longer members of it. One cannot knowingly and willingly participate in an effort to rend the body of Christ without thereby separating himself from that body. Although Christ is indivisible, yet when members tear themselves from His body, both Christ and the body bleed. Activities on the part of church members that lead to disunity, division, and schism result in crucifying Christ again and putting Him to open shame.

13. When facing His own imminent death, what did Jesus ask the Father to grant the disciples? John 17:20, 21.

NOTE.—"As we approach the last crisis, it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities. The world is filled with storm and war and variance. Yet under one head—the papal power—the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate. While he seeks to unite his agents in warring against the truth, he will work to divide and scatter its advocates. Jealousy, evil surmising, evil speaking, are instigated by him to produce discord and dissension. The members of Christ's church have the power to thwart the purpose of the adversary of souls."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 7, p. 182.

14. What will be the result when true unity is achieved in the church? John 17:23.

NOTE.—"God's people are not to be in confusion, lacking order and harmony, consistency and beauty. The Lord is greatly dishonored when disunion exists among

His people. Truth is a unit. The unity that God requires must be cultivated day by day if we would answer the prayer of Christ. The disunion that is striving for existence among those who profess to believe the last message of mercy to be given to the world, must find no place; for it would be a fearful hindrance to the advancement of God's work. His servants are to be one, as Christ is one with the Father; their powers, illuminated, inspired, and sanctified, must be united to make a complete whole. Those who love God and keep His commandments are not to draw apart; they are to press together."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, pp. 174, 175.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

1. Are my own attitudes such as will foster a spirit of unity and brotherly love, or the spirit of criticism, aloofness, and divisiveness?

2. Am I consciously striving to help bring about the unity for which Jesus prayed?

3. Do I recognize that when I seek to commune with Christ I must also seek fellowship with other children of God?

Lesson 13, for December 25, 1965

The Church in the Last Days

MEMORY VERSE: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 593-602; "Prophets and Kings," pages 722-733; "Testimonies," Vol. 8, pp. 41-47; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary," Vol. 7, pp. 813-815.

STUDY AIM: To study the Bible teaching concerning God's special message for the people in the last days and the reward God is preparing for the church when His kingdom of glory shall be ushered in.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General survey; begin learning memory verse.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-5.	☐
Monday: Questions 6-8; read from study helps.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 9, 10; read further from study helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-13.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading study helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Remnant Church

1. God always retained a remnant. Isa. 37:31, 32.
2. The remnant in Paul's day. Rom. 11:5.
3. In the Dark Ages. Rev. 12:14-16.
4. In the last days. Rev. 12:17.
5. God is still gathering His flock. John 10:16; Rev. 18:4.

II. The Church Militant

6. A warfare to be waged. 2 Tim. 2:3, 4; Eph. 6:11-13.
7. A special message for the last days. Rev. 14:6-12.
8. Restores the downtrodden Sabbath. Isa. 58:12, 13.
9. Calls men out of spiritual Babylon. Rev. 18:4.
10. The blessed hope of the church. Titus 2:11-14.

III. The Church Triumphant

11. The second coming of Christ. Rev. 14:14, 15.
12. The members glorified. Phil. 3:20, 21; 1 Cor. 15:51-54.
13. The final triumph. Rev. 7:14-17; 15:2, 3; 22:1-6.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today. He has 'let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen,' even to His covenant-keeping people, who faithfully 'render Him the fruits in their seasons.' Never has the Lord been without true representatives on this earth who have made His interests their own. These witnesses for God are numbered among the spiritual Israel, and to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 713, 714.

The Remnant Church

1. Despite repeated military defeats with the scattering of the Hebrew people, what did God always retain? Isa. 37:31, 32.

NOTE.—"The 'remnant' of OT times is thus composed of successive generations of Israelites—God's chosen people. Again and again the majority apostatized, but each time there was a faithful 'remnant' that became exclusive heirs to the sacred promises, privileges, and responsibilities of the covenant originally made with Abraham and confirmed at Sinai. This 'remnant' was the formally appointed group to which God purposed to send the Messiah and through which He proposed to evangelize the heathen; it did not consist of scattered individuals as such, however faithful they might be, but was a corporate entity, God's visible, divinely commissioned organization on earth."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* "Additional Note" on Revelation 12, page 814.

2. On what basis was the remnant reckoned in Paul's day? Rom. 11:5. Compare Rom. 9:27.

NOTE.—"Notwithstanding Israel's failure as a nation, there remained among them a goodly remnant of such as should be saved. At the time of the Saviour's advent there were faithful men and women who had received with gladness the message of John the Baptist, and had thus been led to study anew the prophecies concerning the Messiah. When the early Christian church was founded, it was composed of these faithful Jews who recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the one for whose advent they had been longing."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 376, 377.

3. During the religious persecutions of the Dark Ages, where did Christians flee for protection, and in what manner did help come? Rev. 12:14-16.

NOTE.—"A few centuries after Christ the church experienced the great papal apostasy. For some 1260 years papal power more or less effectively suppressed and scattered God's true representatives on earth. . . . Through the Reformation of the 16th century . . . God purposed once more to lead forth a 'remnant,' this time

from mystical Babylon. Various Protestant groups served as Heaven's appointed harbingers of truth, point by point restoring the glorious gospel of salvation. But group after group became satisfied with its partial concept of truth and failed to advance as light from God's Word increased. With each refusal to advance, God raised up another group as His chosen instrument for the proclamation of truth."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* "Additional Note" on Revelation 12, pages 814, 815.

4. Against what special group is Satan's warfare directed? What are the unique, identifying marks of this group? Rev. 12:17.

NOTE.—"This is *the* 'remnant' of the long and worthy line of God's chosen people that has survived the fierce onslaughts of the dragon down through history, most particularly the darkness, persecution, and error of the 'time, and times, and half a time,' or 1260 'days' of vs. 6, 14. It is God's *last* 'remnant' by virtue of the fact that it is the appointed herald of His final appeal to the world to accept the gracious gift of salvation (ch. 14:6-12)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* "Additional Note" on Revelation 12, page 815.

5. Are all whom God accepts as His true followers in one fold, or is God still gathering His flock? John 10:16; Rev. 18:4.

NOTE.—"Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion. There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time."—*The Great Controversy,* page 390.

"It is true that there are real Christians in the Roman Catholic communion. Thousands in that church are serving God according to the best light they have."—*Ibid.,* p. 565.

"Christians of past generations observed the Sunday, supposing that in so doing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath; and there are now true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before Him."—*Ibid.,* page 449.

The Church Militant

6. To what are loyal witnesses for Christ likened, and why are they counseled to put on armor and take spiritual weapons? 2 Tim. 2:3, 4; Eph. 6:11-13.

7. According to Bible prophecies, what special message will be given to the world in the last days? Rev. 14:6-12.

8. What downtrodden institution will be uplifted by the remnant church? Isa. 58:12, 13. Compare Rev. 12:17.

NOTE.—"The Sabbath has been torn from its place by the man of sin, and a common working day has been exalted in its stead. A breach has been made in the law, and this breach is to be repaired. The true Sabbath is to be exalted to its rightful position as God's rest day. . . .

"The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part. Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this. We are to show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God's kingdom or the mark

of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 6, pp. 351, 352.

9. Why must God's last-day message be proclaimed even to those called "My people"? Rev. 18:4.

NOTE.—"Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared: 'Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.' Revelation 18:5. She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and 'receive not of her plagues.' Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: 'Come out of her, My people.' These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth."—*The Great Controversy,* page 604.

10. What is the great hope of the church militant, and how does this hope affect the daily life of the church members? Titus 2:11-14.

The Church Triumphant

11. What climactic event follows the proclamation of the last-day message? Rev. 14:14, 15. Compare Matt. 24:30; 25:31, 32.

12. What does Christ do for His people at the time of His coming? Phil. 3:20, 21; 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

13. Describe some of the glorious experiences and privileges of the members of the household of God following the second coming of Jesus. Rev. 7:14-17; 15:2, 3; 22:1-6.

Thoughts for Personal Meditation

"In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. . . . An angel flying in the midst of heaven put the standard of Immanuel into many hands, while a mighty general cried out with a loud voice: 'Come into line. Let those who are loyal to the commandments of God and the testimony of Christ now take their position.'. . .

"Now the church is militant. Now we are confronted with a world in midnight darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. But the day is coming in which the battle will have been fought, the victory won. . . .

"This is the scene that is presented to me. But the church must and will fight against seen and unseen foes. . . . This is no time for the people of God to be weaklings. We cannot afford to be off our guard for one moment."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, pp. 41, 42.

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

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

December 25, 1965

Australasian Division

The eyes of the Sabbath school this quarter will be focused upon the Solomon Islands. This group of islands lies in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. Most of them are in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate. Australia governs Bougainville, Buka, and a few nearby islands as United Nations trust territories. The Solomons cover 16,000 square miles, and have a population of 100,000. The climate is hot, damp, and unhealthful. The soil is fertile, but is not widely farmed. The islands are mountainous, heavily wooded, and well watered.

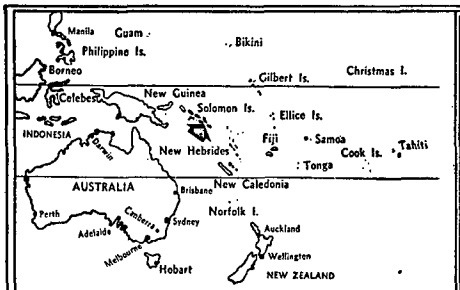
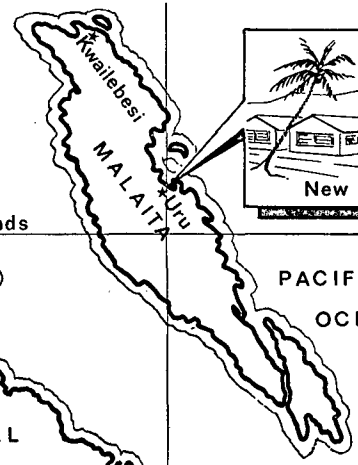
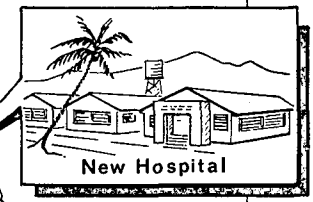
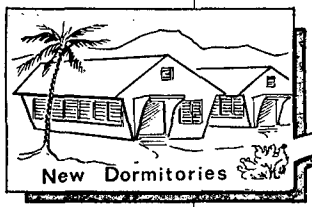
The overflow from the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will go to help build a sixty-bed hospital on the island of Malaita, and to help rebuild the Betikama Missionary School on Guadalcanal. The island of Malaita is the last stronghold of heathenism in these lovely isles, and it is believed that a hospital in the midst of the population of 55,000—810 of whom are already Seventh-day Adventists—will help our missionaries in our final witness to these poor people. The Betikama School has been carrying on a good work for a number of years, and the buildings are worn out. The Australasian Division is not proud of the appearance of this school at the present time, but it is proud of the students who have gone out from it to help carry on the Lord's work.

Lessons for the First Quarter 1966

Sabbath school members who have failed to receive a senior *Lesson Quarterly* for the first quarter of 1966 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first lesson. The title of the lessons for the quarter is, "Lessons From the Epistles to the Corinthians." The title of the first lesson is "Establishment of the Corinthian Church." The memory verse is 1 Corinthians 2:1, 2. Study helps are: *The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 243-254; and the *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*. The texts to be studied are:

Ques. 1. Acts 15:36.
Ques. 2. Acts 15:37-40.
Ques. 3. Acts 16:1-3.
Ques. 4. Acts 16:6-10.
Ques. 5. Acts 16:11.
Ques. 6. Acts 16:12, 13; 17:1, 2, 10, 11, 15-17.
Ques. 7. Acts 18:1-3.
Ques. 8. Acts 18:4.
Ques. 9. Acts 18:5.
Ques. 10. Acts 18:6-8.
Ques. 11. Acts 18:9, 10.
Ques. 12. Acts 18:11.
Ques. 13. Acts 18:12-17.
Ques. 14. Acts 18:18.

Australasian Division

BISMARCK-SOLOMONS UNION

UNION	POPULATION	CHURCHES	CH. MEM.	S.S. MEM.
BISMARCK-SOLOMONS U. M.	303,130	135	10,105	18,756
CENTRAL PACIFIC U. M.	914,796	91	8,063	10,711
CORAL SEA U. M.	1,764,500	145	15,449	45,501
TRANS-COMMONWEALTH U. C.	5,942,173	157	13,493	15,351
TRANS-TASMAN U. C.	7,290,485	197	20,299	22,174
DIVISION TOTALS	16,215,084	725	67,409	112,493