



Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 12, The Church:** “The church is God’s family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 93-95

WORLD CHANGERS

The Waldensians were a small group of faithful Bible-believing Christians who dared to be different. They refused to accept the decrees of the state-sponsored church in place of the Word of God. For them, the commands of God were more important than the traditions of people. The state church responded with an army to destroy them.

Along with thousands of others the Waldensians died rather than compromise their integrity. They accepted martyrdom rather than surrender their faith. The witness of these faithful martyrs calls us to loyalty. Their testimony calls us to an unwavering commitment to God. God is calling this generation to a deeper commitment. He is calling us to an uncompromising faith, to a steadfast loyalty to His Word.

The purpose of the church is not to compromise with the world; it is to change it. It is not to conform to the world; it is to transform it. The church is not merely a corporate institution, although the church is organized for a mission. The church is a body of converted Christians saved by grace, committed to His will, with a mission to the world. The church is God’s people redeemed to serve, meeting needs everywhere in Jesus’ name. The church is administrators, pastors, laypeople, youth, children, you, and me sharing His love, proclaiming His truth to everyone everywhere. The church is us—all of us.

The stalwart faith of the Waldensians echoes down the corridors of time. The unshakable faith of these heroes of yesterday speaks to our hearts. Today, why not determine again, by God’s grace, to be faithful until He comes?

—Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, pp. 118, 119, 173

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 12:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:14, 15.
- » A group of youth was working on a service project together. They were washing cars and cleaning them thoroughly, inside and out. No donations were accepted; it was a gift to the community. Unfortunately, a thoughtless comment about someone’s inadequacy at washing cars slipped out. Everyone had been working so well together; however, in one moment it seemed that the mission was gone, the team was split, and what was fun had become a chore. What would you do if you were the leader and had several hours of work left to do? How would you get your team back on track?
- » When have you experienced synergy before? (When the whole is better than the value of all the parts.) When have you had a great team success? Describe what happened and show how the team was more effective than any one person’s strengths.

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE CHURCH

- » Read Matthew 28:19, 20; Ephesians 2:19-22; 2 Peter 2:9.
- » Christ is the foundation of the church. He has saved us. God gives each of us a special gift (talent) and the Holy Spirit helps us to use our talents to build up His church and share His message of salvation with others. He promises to always be with us.
- » As a part of God’s “household,” what goals can you set that will help you today, this week, this month, to use your talents to work together with others in the church to tell others about His love?
- » Cross out the word “disunity” every time it appears and then rewrite the verse below so you can read the message God has for His followers.

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Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.
- » While a group were building a church in Sarawak, it became clear how all the parts are needed for the whole project to work. For example, during the building project the early risers would bring bags of cement to be mixed before breakfast. As every new person trickled in to help, more work was accomplished; windows were placed in the walls, lumber was cut, and water was distributed to thirsty workers. Some were encouraging; others were teaching; still others were arguing about what needed to happen right away. The older, more experienced men and women found young people listening to their wisdom. Those who were only young at heart were inspired by the dedication of the youth. It was because all hands were on deck that the goal of the mission prevailed. Not one person could take credit, and not one person entertained the impossible notion that they could have done it alone. So it is with the church—your church.
- » It is no wonder when Jesus said “You are the salt of the earth” and “You are the light of the world,” He was using the plural form of “you.” In other words, when you all come together with all your different personalities—you have a power greater than one person who seems great.
- » Scan through the verses mentioned in this lesson, and you will see that we were designed to need each other in the same way that the body needs a hand, or a foot, or the eyes. It might be one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome, but the collective work of a church on a mission is the church at its finest. Don’t think for a moment that it will be easy, but know that it is worth it. When we truly embrace this truth as a church, we will have success beyond our wildest dreams. The possibilities are endless.
- » “Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin” (Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 286).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Romans 16.
- » Put yourself in Paul’s shoes and write a modern-day chapter about your church. Make sure you reread Romans 16 to get a feel for what Paul was doing. Try to sound like Paul—if you can. Use the names of families, pastors, teachers, and elders to reflect the work that is taking place in your area. Paul greeted them, acknowledged their gifts and sacrifices, and simply said hello. Write your letter on the lines below or on separate paper:

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Decode the following message by inserting each substitute letter. The text is from the New King James Version.

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Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Hebrews 10:23-25.
- » Review the memory text.
- » As you read the writings of Paul you can’t help noticing what a team player he is. He is a legend, yet throughout his letters he names people he notices doing the work of God. He learned this from God Himself. If you ever wonder if God notices the little things you do, then be reminded of the promise that “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6). What is so amazing is the way that God sees both our strengths and weaknesses and still believes the best is yet to come for all of us. Don’t miss out on the moments in which you can join the crowd of believers as they work toward heaven’s goal. At times you might feel like one sheep in a huge flock, but be reminded that the Shepherd knows your name.
- » “In every word and act, kindness and love will be revealed; and as each worker fills his appointed place faithfully, the prayer of Christ for the unity of His followers will be answered, and the world will know that these are His disciples” (Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 483).