

Lesson 133 - What is involved with Laboring?

1. What is labor considered? **Ecclesiastes 3:13, 5:19**

EGW: (no comment)

2. How many days are we given a week to labor? **Exodus 20:9**

EGW: Circumstances will not justify anyone in working upon the Sabbath for the sake of worldly profit. If God excuses one man, He may excuse all. Why may not Brother L, who is a poor man, work upon the Sabbath to earn means for a livelihood when he might by so doing be better able to support his family? Why may not other brethren, or all of us, keep the Sabbath only when it is convenient to do so? The voice from Sinai makes answer: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." {4T 251.3}

3. Until what age are people expected to labor? **Psalms 90:10**

EGW: Our lifework now should be to prepare for eternity. We know not how soon our lifework here may close, and how essential that our low, sinful nature should be overcome, and we conform to the image of Christ. We have not one moment's time to squander. We need to be daily preparing for eternity. Our lifetime is granted us to seek the boon of eternal life. God has granted us a probation, and, if we live our threescore years and ten, how short is this period to work out our salvation! Then compare this period with the life that measures with the life of God. The short period of our test and proving may end any time. Then how earnest should we be to secure a clear title to a home in the earth made new.... {TDG 117.4}

4. How long of a day ought to be put into laboring, not necessarily just for an employer? **Psalms 104:22-23**

EGW: (no comment)

5. At the end of a long day's work, what is the sleep considered? **Ecclesiastes 5:12**

EGW: God has given us night as one of his greatest blessings, bringing quiet and repose to overworked bodies and minds. We cannot prosecute any labor, however interesting and essential, without periods of rest, when the human machinery shall stand still. When the hour of retirement comes, we should yield to nature's sweet restorer. If her claims are not obeyed, if the hours of sleep are abridged, the result will be weariness and want of every power. God has not constituted men to pursue one round of either labor or enjoyment. {PH043 38.3}

6. When does our laboring cease? **Revelation 14:13**

EGW: Relatives have a fair chance to live by their own industry. Do not spoil them by throwing responsibilities upon them, in the will that you make, that they know not how to manage. You are now making decisions for all time in reference to the future good of the Lord's grand gospel missionary work, that even after you are dead, your entrusted means may be at work in carrying the message into new places, thus adding new territory to the Lord's kingdom. You must now, while alive, make diligent, faithful work, that after your death gifts and offerings may come into the treasury of the cause of God. By making this provision you express your interest in the work of God, which must be sustained and the standard of truth lifted in new places. Your treasure is loaned to you in trust and is the Lord's. Now, you are to select stewards of God to pass the same along. Your helping hand may be still in death, yet your works follow you through living, faithful stewards as your representatives, and you are thus fulfilling your appointed work. Said Christ to John, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." {GH, December 1, 1901 par. 3}

7. Who needs to be involved in our labor, otherwise it would be considered vain? **Psalms 127:1**

EGW: True and abiding happiness can never be derived from any human being. We may have special, select friends that, all unperceived and unacknowledged by us, we place in the heart where God should be, and we can never perfect a round, full Christian experience until every earthly support is removed, and the soul centers its entire affections about God. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: Except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain." {MR926 36.2}

There is need of watching unceasingly the natural affections and tendencies of our own hearts, lest we become estranged from God, and place our affections on human beings to the dishonor of God; for our happiness will be imperiled unless we watch, and pray, and cherish the faith that works by

love and purifies the soul. We must make God our trust. {MR926 36.3}

8. What shall be done with the result of our labor? **Psalms 128:2, 2 Thessalonians 3:10**

EGW: If we are to have pardon for our sins, we must first have a realization of what sin is, that we may repent, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. We must have a solid foundation for our faith; it must be founded on the word of God, and its results will be seen in obedience to God's expressed will. Says the apostle, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Faith and works will keep us evenly balanced, and make us successful in the work of perfecting Christian character. Jesus says, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Speaking of temporal food, the apostle said, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." The same rule applies to our spiritual nourishment; if any would have the bread of eternal life, let him make efforts to obtain it. {ST, June 16, 1890 par. 4}

9. What does proper labor tend to? **Proverbs 10:16**

EGW: (no comment)

10. What should we sense about the wellbeing of the household through proper labor? **Proverbs 13:11**

EGW: (no comment)

11. In all the labor that is done, what is there that is not necessarily regarding money? **Proverbs 14:23**

EGW: (no comment)

12. If people are not laboring, what do they spend too much time in doing instead what they ought to be doing while getting nowhere? **Proverbs 14:23**

EGW: (no comment)

13. What is the result of a person who refuses to labor? **Proverbs 21:25**

EGW: The prince of darkness has set in operation every device to ruin and destroy man. He has legions of evil workers uniting with him to obliterate the image of God in our youth. I ask those who are acquainted with truth, who know righteousness, What are you doing? Are you using your influence to bring into the ranks of the Lord's army all whom you can possibly reach? Have you yourself enlisted to fight the battles of the Lord? As Christians it is our work to represent Christ. We are to set an example that shall be in striking contrast to the practises of this evil age. He that is selfish will neglect to do the very work he ought to do, and take up a work that God has not given him to do. "He that loveth pleasure ["sport," margin] shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honor." "The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not." {RH, August 11, 1896 par. 5}

14. What are we not to labor towards? **Proverbs 23:4**

EGW: Says the wise man, "Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom." "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live." Proverbs 23:4; 15:27. And the apostle Paul declares, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 Timothy 6:9. {PP 168.2}

When Lot entered Sodom he fully intended to keep himself free from iniquity and to command his household after him. But he signally failed. The corrupting influences about him had an effect upon his own faith, and his children's connection with the inhabitants of Sodom bound up his interest in a measure with theirs. The result is before us. {PP 168.3}

Many are still making a similar mistake. In selecting a home they look more to the temporal advantages they may gain than to the moral and social influences that will surround themselves and their families. They choose a beautiful and fertile country, or remove to some flourishing city, in the hope of securing greater prosperity; but their children are surrounded by temptation, and too often they form associations that are unfavorable to the development of piety and the formation of a right character. The atmosphere of lax morality, of unbelief, of indifference to religious things, has a tendency to counteract the influence of the parents. Examples of rebellion against parental and divine authority are ever before the youth; many form attachments for infidels and unbelievers, and

cast in their lot with the enemies of God. {PP 168.4}

In choosing a home, God would have us consider, first of all, the moral and religious influences that will surround us and our families. We may be placed in trying positions, for many cannot have their surroundings what they would; and whenever duty calls us, God will enable us to stand uncorrupted, if we watch and pray, trusting in the grace of Christ. But we should not needlessly expose ourselves to influences that are unfavorable to the formation of Christian character. When we voluntarily place ourselves in an atmosphere of worldliness and unbelief, we displease God and drive holy angels from our homes. {PP 169.1}

Those who secure for their children worldly wealth and honor at the expense of their eternal interests, will find in the end that these advantages are a terrible loss. Like Lot, many see their children ruined, and barely save their own souls. Their lifework is lost; their life is a sad failure. Had they exercised true wisdom, their children might have had less of worldly prosperity, but they would have made sure of a title to the immortal inheritance. {PP 169.2}

15. What is meaningless labor compared to? **Ecclesiastes 5:16**

EGW: (no comment)

16. What becomes of a fool who tries to labor? **Ecclesiastes 10:15**

EGW: If your children have been unaccustomed to labor, they will soon become weary. They will complain of side ache, pain in the shoulders, and tired limbs; and you will be in danger, through sympathy, of doing the work yourselves rather than have them suffer a little. Let the burden upon the children be very light at first, and then increase it a little every day, until they can do a proper amount of labor without becoming so weary. {AH 284.1}

17. What type of labor ought to be avoided? **Isaiah 55:2, John 6:27**

EGW: If Christ is to you as a valuable treasure, if you find in Him your greatest satisfaction, if He is prized and cherished above all others, if you regard everything else as loss that you may win Him, you are eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood and are becoming conformed to His image. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled. The invitation is: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy

wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? . . . eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Isaiah 55:1, 2). . . . {TMK 107.4}

18. What should not be included in our labor? **Hosea 12:8 [This is like despite good work being performed yet shortchanging an employer by taking long breaks, leaving early, arriving late, which are all acts of stealing.]**

EGW: (no comment)

19. How many things involve labor? **Ecclesiastes 1:8**

EGW: (no comment)

20. All week long, what should we be laboring towards? **Hebrews 4:11, 4:4**

EGW: All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. We are not merely to observe the Sabbath as a legal matter. We are to understand its spiritual bearing upon all the transactions of life. All who regard the Sabbath as a sign between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day they will have the companionship of Christ and will exemplify the perfection of His character. Every day their light will shine forth to others in good works. {6T 353.4}

21. On a spiritual sense, what ought we be praying for? **Matthew 9:37-38**

EGW: When Jesus said the harvest was great, and the laborers were few, he did not urge upon his disciples the necessity of ceaseless toil, but said, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." He tells his disciples that their strength has been severely tried, that they will be unfitted for future labor unless they rest awhile. In this the Master would teach his workers a lesson, and shall they not heed his words? With an eye single to the glory of

God, in the name of Jesus, economize your powers, that after being refreshed with rest, you may do more and better work. Would that every child of God might be impressed with the necessity of being temperate in his eating, dressing, and working, that he may do the best work for the cause of God. When the laborer has been under a pressure of work and care, and is overworked in mind and body, he should turn aside and rest awhile, not for selfish gratification, but that he may be better prepared for future duties. We have a vigilant foe, who is ever upon our track, to take advantage of every weakness that he may make his temptations effective for evil. When the mind is overstrained and the body enfeebled, he can take advantage, and press the soul with his fiercest temptations that he may cause the downfall of the child of God. Let the laborer for God carefully husband his strength, and when wearied with toil that must come upon him, let him turn aside and rest and commune with Jesus. {RH, November 14, 1893 par. 10}

22. What two types of laborers work for God? **John 4:37**

EGW: I am sad to see so few laborers. As Jesus saw what might be accomplished by intelligent effort, He said, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." {15MR 62.3}

We greatly need men who can both sow and reap, who can gather souls unto eternal life. I am glad to see that Elder Simpson is of good courage. Oh, that the church members who have been long in the truth would feel such a burden for souls that, as Elder Simpson leaves Los Angeles, they might continue a work that would gather in a harvest of souls. Workers are greatly needed just now in Los Angeles. I pray for men who can continue the work with those who are interested. After working for a time in San Diego, I think Elder Simpson will be ready to go to Redlands and Riverside. {15MR 63.1}

23. If we are "in the Lord", what shall our labor not be? **1 Corinthians 15:58**

EGW: What can give you greater joy than to see children and youth following Christ, the great Shepherd, who calls, and the sheep and lambs hear his voice and follow him? What can spread more sunshine through the soul of the interested, devoted worker than to know that his persevering, patient labor is not in vain in the Lord, and to see his pupils have the sunshine of joy in their souls because Christ has forgiven their sins? What can be more satisfying to the worker together with God, than to see children and youth receiving the impressions of the spirit of God in true nobility of character and in the restoration of the moral image of God--the children seeking the peace coming

from the Prince of Peace? The truth a bondage?--Yes, in one sense; it binds the willing souls in captivity to Jesus Christ, bowing their hearts to the gentleness of Jesus Christ. O it means so much more than finite minds can comprehend, to present in every missionary effort Jesus Christ and him crucified. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." [Isaiah 53:5.] "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." [2 Corinthians 5:21.] This is to be the burden of our work. If any one thinks he is capable of teaching in the Sabbath-school or in the day school the science of education, he needs first to learn the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, that he may teach this the highest of all sciences. {CE 156.1}

24. Elders are worth double honor because they labor in what? **1 Timothy 5:17**

EGW: (no comment)

25. What is a laborer worthy of? **1 Timothy 5:18, Luke 10:7**

EGW: One tenth of all the increase was claimed by the Lord as His own, and to withhold the tithe was regarded by Him as robbery. {AA 336.1}

It was to this plan for the support of the ministry that Paul referred when he said, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." And later, in writing to Timothy, the apostle said, "The laborer is worthy of his reward." 1 Timothy 5:18. {AA 336.2}

The payment of the tithe was but a part of God's plan for the support of His service. Numerous gifts and offerings were divinely specified. Under the Jewish system the people were taught to cherish a spirit of liberality both in sustaining the cause of God and in supplying the wants of the needy. For special occasions there were freewill offerings. At the harvest and the vintage, the first fruits of the field--corn, wine, and oil--were consecrated as an offering to the Lord. The gleanings and the corners of the field were reserved for the poor. The first fruits of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, were set apart for God. So also were the first-born of all animals, and a redemption price was paid for the first-born son. The first fruits were to be presented before the Lord at the sanctuary and were then devoted to the use of the priests. {AA 336.3}