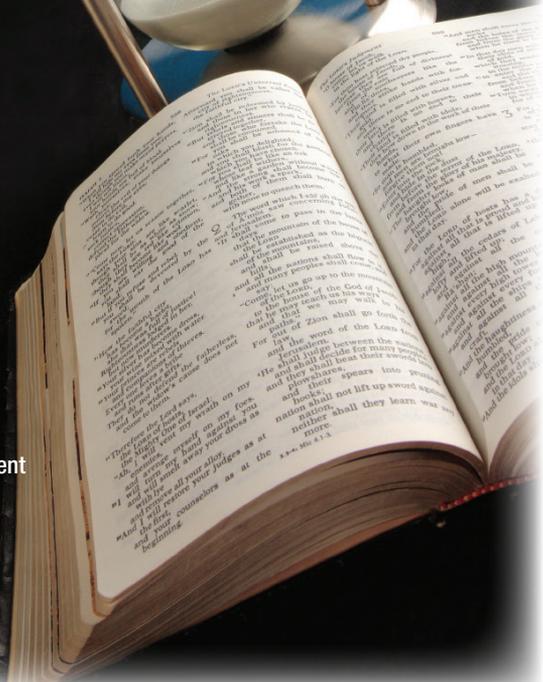


"Victory in Christ"

LEADERSHIP
SEMINAR

WORKBOOK

Developed by the
General Conference Youth Department
S.D.A. Church, Reform Movement
International Missionary Society



A Workbook was prepared for the International Youth Conference and Leadership Seminar, held August 21-28, 2013, in Portland, Maine, U.S.A. It is now being released in January 2014 in a form that many people can use for both large and small groups and that may be copied without permission from the publisher, the General Conference Youth Department, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, International Missionary Society. For activities of the Youth Department, go to www.uponhighplaces.org.

Bible verses are from the *King James Version*.

“Victory in Christ”

LEADERSHIP SEMINAR WORKBOOK

- ∞ PERSONAL VICTORY IN CHRIST
- ∞ PUBLIC VICTORY IN CHRIST
- ∞ ETERNAL VICTORY IN CHRIST

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH, REFORM MOVEMENT
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY
GENERAL CONFERENCE YOUTH DEPARTMENT

“Christ is our pattern, the perfect and holy example that has been given us to follow. We can never equal the pattern, but we may imitate and resemble it according to our ability. . . . When we surrender all we have and are to God, and are placed in trying and dangerous positions, coming in contact with Satan, we should remember that we shall have victory in meeting the enemy in the name and power of the Conqueror. Every angel would be commissioned to come to our rescue when we thus depend upon Christ, rather than that we should be permitted to be overcome. But we need not expect to get the victory without suffering, for Jesus suffered in conquering for us. . . .

“The Christian life is a life of warfare, of continual conflict. It is a battle and a march. But every act of obedience to Christ, every act of self-denial for His sake, every trial well endured, every victory gained over temptation, is a step in the march to the glory of final victory.” —(Manuscript 65, 1894; *Review and Herald*, February 5, 1895) *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 621, 622.

The universal principles in this Workbook are adapted from *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Stephen R. Covey, Franklin Covey Company, first published in 1989. Here the habits are placed in a spiritual setting as eternal principles of the Holy Scriptures.

The Workbook may be adapted to any program. In addition to the Seminar outlines, topics and outlines for morning worships and services present practical examples and applications of the principles. Services for the Sabbath day are placed after the three seminars for "Personal Victory in Christ."

Experienced presenters should be selected for the seven seminars, the evening services, and the Sabbath service, while there may be participants who are able to present the morning worships.

For the Leadership Team Presentations, the participants are divided into eight teams, each named after one of the eight Bible characters listed in the Workbook and each preparing three presentations (one each for "Personal Victory in Christ," "Public Victory in Christ," and "Eternal Victory in Christ"). Time (1-2 hours) needs to be scheduled for the teams to get together to examine the life of their Bible character, consider how that person did or did not apply the principles in his life that were covered in the seminar, and prepare a 20-minute presentation about his character in this context. There are pages for the participants to take notes on the presentations, as well as other pages for notes.

The teams may need to be divided up differently, depending on the number of participants. For example, you may want to have four teams, with each team presenting two Bible characters each.

The seminar organizers are encouraged to internalize all seven principles and practice them consistently in their regular field of service so they can experience their value first hand. Then, before the seminar begins, let each individual organizer and presenter spend time in earnest personal study and prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit so he or she will be able to flesh out the outlines in the best possible way for the benefit of the specific individuals attending the event.

Finally, let the presenters be very aware of their responsibility to encourage the participants to discover their Heaven-bestowed talents and skills and use them to to bless others through their connection to the Source of life and love, not just now but for eternity.

LEADERSHIP SEMINAR GUIDING PRINCIPLE

“We do not know what great interests may be at stake in the proving of God. There is no safety except in strict obedience to the word of God. All His promises are made upon condition of faith and obedience, and a failure to comply with His commands cuts off the fulfillment to us of the rich provisions of the Scriptures. We should not follow impulse, nor rely on the judgment of men; we should look to the revealed will of God and walk according to His definite commandment, no matter what circumstances may surround us. God will take care of the results; by faithfulness to His word we may in time of trial prove before men and angels that the Lord can trust us in difficult places to carry out His will, honor His name, and bless His people.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 621, 622.

“God in Christ”

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19.

What does it mean that God was in Christ? How were His thoughts, words, and actions under His Father’s guidance and special care?

“God was in Christ in human form, and endured all the temptations wherewith man was beset; in our behalf He participated in the suffering and trials of sorrowful human nature.” —(*The Southern Watchman*, December 10, 1907) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 930.

What is the significance of this for people today?

“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.” 1 John 4:15-17.

How is the gift of God’s supernatural care related to personal victory?

“Personal Victory in Christ 1”

Personal victory is what one achieves by himself or herself alone with Jesus. It is shown in what one is and what one does when no other person is around.

“So long as we are in the world, we shall meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If Christ dwells in us, we shall be patient, kind, and forbearing, cheerful amid frets and irritations. Day by day and year by year we shall conquer self, and grow into a noble heroism. This is our allotted task; but it cannot be accomplished without help from Jesus, resolute decision, unwavering purpose, continual watchfulness, and unceasing prayer. Each one has a personal battle to fight. Not even God can make our characters noble or our lives useful, unless we become co-workers with Him. Those who decline the struggle lose the strength and joy of victory.” —*Gospel Workers*, p. 477.

PRINCIPLE: BE PROACTIVE

“There are men who flatter themselves that they might do something great and good if they were only circumstanced differently, while they make no use of the faculties they already have by working in the positions where providence has placed them. Man can make his circumstances, but circumstances should never make the man. Man should seize circumstances as his instruments with which to work. He should master circumstances, but should never allow circumstances to master him. Individual independence and individual power are the qualities now needed. Individual character need not be sacrificed, but it should be modulated, refined, elevated. . . .

“The cause of God demands men who can see quickly and act instantaneously at the right time and with power. If you wait to measure every difficulty and balance every perplexity you meet, you will do but little. You will have obstacles and difficulties to encounter at every turn, and you must with firm purpose decide to conquer them, or they will conquer you.” —*Gospel Workers*, pp. 96, 97.

Definition of “proactive”: [In contrast to “reactive”] Acting in anticipation of future problems, needs, or changes.

Being proactive means acting purposefully and promptly in a principle-centered way. For example, “Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.” Daniel 1:8.

While being aware and considerate of others, a person who is proactive does not allow others to control him and does not let others’ influence cause him to deviate from his foundational values or purpose.

1 Corinthians 2:14; 15:22, 57, 58; John 8:12; Ephesians 2:2-5.

“Personal Victory in Christ 2”

PRINCIPLE: BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND

“And it came to pass, when the time was come that He should be received up, He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.” Luke 9:51.

“Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation.” Psalm 91:14-16.

What is necessary for a person always to keep his focus on what is most important? This is a personal work, but there is supernatural help for its accomplishment.

“The life-work given to us is that of preparation for the life eternal, and if we accomplish this work as God has designed that we should, every temptation may work for our advance; for as we resist its allurements, we make progress in the divine life. In the heat of the conflict, while engaged in earnest spiritual warfare, unseen agencies are by our side, commissioned of heaven to aid us in our wrestlings, and in the crisis, strength and firmness and energy are imparted to us, and we have more than mortal power. But unless the human agent shall bring his will into harmony with the will of God, unless he shall forsake every idol, and overcome every wrong practice, he will never succeed in the warfare; but will be finally overcome. Those who would be conquerors must engage in conflict with unseen agencies; inward corruption must be overcome, and every thought must be brought into harmony with, and subjection to, Christ. The Holy Spirit is ever at work seeking to purify, refine, and discipline the souls of men in order that they may become fitted for the society of saints and angels, and as overcomers be able to sing the song of redemption, ascribing glory and honor to God and to the Lamb in the courts above.” —*Christian Education*, p. 122.

Think about what “ends” people seek. God gives everyone freedom to choose his or her end. In the words of Moses, “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days.” Deuteronomy 30:19, 20.

Acts 1:8; Colossians 2:10, 13; Romans 6:6, 7, 22; Galatians 3:26; John 17:14; Ephesians 1:4.

“Personal Victory in Christ 3”

PRINCIPLE: PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST

“There are many who profess to be servants of Christ in name, but they are not so in obedience. Where religious principle governs, the danger of committing important errors is small; for selfishness, which always blinds and deceives, is subordinate. The sincere desire to do others good so predominates that self is forgotten. To have firm religious principles is an inestimable treasure. It is the purest, highest, and most elevated influence mortals can possess. Such have an anchor. Every act is well considered, lest its effect be injurious to another, and lead away from Christ. The constant inquiry of the mind is, Lord, how shall I best serve and glorify Thy name in the earth? How shall I conduct my life to make Thy name a praise in the earth, and lead others to love, serve, and honor Thee? Let me only desire and choose Thy will. Let the words and example of my Redeemer be the light and strength of my heart. While I follow and trust in Him, He will not leave me to perish. He shall be my crown of rejoicing.” —*Review and Herald*, August 10, 1886.

One's world view plays a key role in what he or she puts in first place. World view is defined as “1. The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world. 2. A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group.”

It is very wise to make a conscious decision about our world view, rather than letting it be determined by other people, by society (such as schools), or by the government. A person's world view affects all of his actions—even unconscious ones.

1 Corinthians 15:22; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:1; Ephesians 1:3; John 15:1.

“Remember that working with Christ as your personal Saviour
is your strength and your victory.”
—*Bible Training School*, January 1, 1904.

***“Private victories precede public victories.
You can't invert that process any more than
you can harvest a crop before you plant it.”***

—Stephen R. Covey

“Christ in God”

“Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works’ sake.” John 14:9-11.

New Testament concepts using the word “in,” “one,” and “love” are important to look at closely, for they hold the key to victory in Christ.

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” 1 Corinthians 15:22.

“That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.” “I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.” “And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” John 17:21, 23, 26.

Through the same supernatural connection that Jesus had with His Father, His children are connected to Him. This is the supremely valuable, everlasting gift of the Holy Spirit that Jesus gives with joy to all who surrender their lives to Him.

“When man dies to sin and is quickened to new life in Christ, divine love fills his heart; his understanding is sanctified; he drinks from an inexhaustible fountain of joy and knowledge, and the light of an eternal day shines upon his path, for with him continually is the Light of life.”
–*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 273.

“Christ in You”

“At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.” John 14:20.

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” “As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.” John 15:4-7, 9, 10.

“God desires to manifest through you the holiness, the benevolence, the compassion, of His own character. Yet the Saviour does not bid the disciples labor to bear fruit. He tells them to abide in Him. ‘If ye abide in Me,’ He says, ‘and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.’ It is through the word that Christ abides in His followers. This is the same vital union that is represented by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The words of Christ are spirit and life. Receiving them, you receive the life of the Vine. You live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ Matthew 4:4. The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits as in Him.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 677.

The essence of the gospel is to look to Jesus and away from self—continually.

“Said the angel, ‘Have faith in God.’ I saw some tried too hard to believe. Faith is so simple, ye look above it. Satan tried to deceive some of the honest children and had got them looking to self to find worthiness there. I saw they must look away from self to the worthiness of Jesus and throw themselves just as dependent and unworthy as they are upon His mercy and draw by faith strength and nourishment from Him.” —(Letter 8, 1850) *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 145.

“David”

NOTES

“Paul”

NOTES

“Jacob”

NOTES

“Daniel”

NOTES

“Moses”

NOTES

“Peter”

NOTES

“Joseph”

NOTES

“John”

NOTES

“You in Christ”

“Leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less.” —John Maxwell.

The secret of success of top corporate leaders is described as follows by Jim Collins: “In contrast to the very I-centric style of the comparison leaders, we were struck by how the good-to-great leaders didn’t talk about themselves. During interviews . . . they’d talk about the company and the contributions of other executives as long as we’d like but would deflect discussion about their own contributions. . . . It wasn’t just false modesty. Those who worked with or wrote about the good-to-great leaders used words like *quiet, humble, modest, reserved, shy, gracious, mild-mannered, self-effacing, understated, did not believe his own clippings*; and so forth. . . . They were seemingly ordinary people quietly producing extraordinary results.” —*Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don’t*, pp. 27, 28.

The greatest leader in history, the One whom we need to follow, is Jesus Christ! The only way to be a leader like Christ is to be His follower.

“Many feel that it would be a great privilege to visit the scenes of Christ’s life on earth, to walk where He trod, to look upon the lake beside which He loved to teach, and the hills and valleys on which His eyes so often rested. But we need not go to Nazareth, to Capernaum, or to Bethany, in order to walk in the steps of Jesus. We shall find His footprints beside the sickbed, in the hovels of poverty, in the crowded alleys of the great city, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall walk in His steps.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 640.

During his Grand Tour of Europe, Count Nicolaus Von Zinzendorf visited an art museum in Düsseldorf where he saw a painting by Domenico Feti, titled *Ecce Homo*, “Behold the Man.” It portrayed the crucified Christ with the legend, “This have I done for you. Now what will you do for Me?” The young count was profoundly moved while looking at the painting, feeling as if Christ Himself was speaking those words to his heart. He vowed that day to dedicate his life in service to Christ.

“Meaning of Victory”

How should “victory” be defined?

Consider the story of the rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-23. What did he win? What did he lose? How did this happen?

“I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is over self.” –Aristotle.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.” 1 Timothy 6:6.

“Every Christian must stand on guard continually, watching every avenue of the soul where Satan might find access. He must pray for divine help and at the same time resolutely resist every inclination to sin. By courage, by faith, by persevering toil, he can conquer. But let him remember that to gain the victory Christ must abide in him and he in Christ. . . . It is only by personal union with Christ, by communion with Him daily, hourly, that we can bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit.” –*The Faith I Live By*, p. 135.

“Remember that working with Christ as your personal Saviour is your strength and your victory. This is the part that all are to act. To those who do this comes the assurance: ‘As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.’ John 1:12. Christ declares: ‘Without Me ye can do nothing.’ John 15:5. And the humble, believing soul responds: ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’ Philippians 4:13.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 39.

“Victory in Christ”

How is it possible to represent Jesus rightly?

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1-4.

“Paul pleaded with those who had once known in their lives the power of God, to return to their first love of gospel truth. With unanswerable arguments he set before them their privilege of becoming free men and women in Christ, through whose atoning grace all who make full surrender are clothed with the robe of His righteousness. He took the position that every soul who would be saved must have a genuine, personal experience in the things of God.
“ –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 388.

“The change in human hearts, the transformation of human characters, is a miracle that reveals an ever-living Saviour, working to rescue souls. A consistent life in Christ is a great miracle. In the preaching of the word of God, the sign that should be manifest now and always is the presence of the Holy Spirit, to make the word a regenerating power to those that hear. This is God’s witness before the world to the divine mission of His Son.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 407.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:5-8.

The gospel experience is of more value than all the riches in the world.

Exerting one’s influence so others choose to make this experience is the greatest calling and purpose in life.

No one needs to fear the coming trials if today he or she (1) fully surrenders to Christ’s love, (2) is listening to the Holy Spirit’s voice, (3) follows and obeys that voice.

The decision to abide in Christ = victory—today, tomorrow, forever.

“Repentance, Will, and Victory in Christ”

How is it that surrender gives victory?

“Be sincere in dealing with God and your own soul. If you come to Him with a heart truly contrite, He will give you the victory. Then you may bear a sweet testimony of freedom, showing forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. He will not misapprehend or misjudge you. Your fellow men cannot absolve you from sin or cleanse you from iniquity. Jesus is the only one who can give you peace. He loved you and gave Himself for you. His great heart of love is ‘touched with the feeling of our infirmities?’ What sins are too great for Him to pardon? what soul too dark and sin-oppressed for Him to save? He is gracious, not looking for merit in us, but of His own boundless goodness healing our backslidings and loving us freely, while we are yet sinners. He is ‘slow to anger, and of great kindness;’ ‘long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.’” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 649.

Each person is the ruler of his own “kingdom”:

King: Will

Capital city: Conscious mind

Subjects: Appetites, desires, passions

Territory: Body

“When self is submerged in Christ, true love springs forth spontaneously. It is not an emotion or an impulse, but a decision of a sanctified will. It consists not in feeling, but in the transformation of the whole heart, soul, and character, which is dead to self and alive unto God. Our Lord and Saviour asks us to give ourselves to Him. Surrendering self to God is all He requires, giving ourselves to Him to be employed as He sees fit. Until we come to this point of surrender, we shall not work happily, usefully, or successfully anywhere.” —(Letter 97, 1898) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 1100, 1101.

Where does repentance come from?

“Repentance is as certainly a gift of Jesus Christ as is forgiveness of sins. Repentance cannot be experienced without Christ; for it is the repentance of which He is the author that is the ground upon which we may apply for pardon. It is through the work of the Holy Spirit that men are led to repentance. It is from Christ that the grace of contrition comes, as well as the gift of pardon, and repentance as well as forgiveness of sins is procured only through the atoning blood of Christ. Those whom God pardons He first makes penitent.” —*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 6, 1894.

Consider your own feelings when something goes wrong. Then, think carefully how others feel and how to help them.

“It is a delicate matter to deal with minds. Only He who reads the heart knows how to bring men to repentance. Only His wisdom can give us success in reaching the lost. You may stand up stiffly, feeling, ‘I am holier than thou,’ and it matters not how correct your reasoning or how true your words; they will never touch hearts. The love of Christ, manifested in word and act, will win its way to the soul, when the reiteration of precept or argument would accomplish nothing.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 163, 164.

“The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit. It means divine illumination, rejoicing in God. It means a heart emptied of self, and blessed with the abiding presence of Christ. When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin. The glory, the fullness, the completeness of the gospel plan is fulfilled in the life. The acceptance of the Saviour brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance. The beauty and fragrance of the character of Christ revealed in the life testifies that God has indeed sent His Son into the world to be its Saviour.” –*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 419, 420.

“Personal Choice—Gift of God”

Freedom is the heart of the gospel.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” Luke 4:18.

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isaiah 1:18.

“Few men think; yet all have opinions.” —George Berkeley.

“Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen. Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions.” —*Education*, pp. 17, 18.

We need to help each other think and act in accordance with how God is leading him or her personally—always in harmony with Scripture. Mutual enthusiasm, love, and power will be the result of appreciating God’s holiness and wonderful character.

“God wants you to have liberty in Him, and by placing yourself in His hands you may abound in every good work, and represent Him to the world.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, p. 53.

“The love of God, cherished in the heart and revealed in the words and acts, will do more to elevate and ennoble human beings than all else can. In the life of Christ, this love found full and complete expression. On the cross of Christ the Saviour made an atonement for the fallen race. Holiness is the fruit of this sacrifice. It is because He has died for us that we are promised this great gift. And Christ longs to bestow this gift on us. He longs to make us partakers of His nature. He longs to save those who by sin have separated themselves from God. He calls upon them to choose His service, to give themselves wholly into His control, to learn from Him how to do God’s will.” —*Signs of the Times*, December 17, 1902.

“Public Victory in Christ 1”

Public victory occurs in what one does with and for others.

“The Lord wants living members in His church, men and women who will encourage one another in faithful service.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 115.

PRINCIPLE: THINK WIN-WIN

When two people are in a business situation, it is usually understood that there are five possibilities:

1. The first person wins, and the second loses
2. The first person loses, and the second wins
3. Both lose
4. Both win
5. No deal

One of the last two options is what we should always strive for. Another way this has been expressed is: “If I help you get what you want, I will get what I want.”

It is also related to the principle of sowing and reaping—“what goes around comes around.” If I am a blessing to you, then you are very likely to be a blessing to me. Jesus stated it this way: “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Matthew 7:12.

This does not mean that one’s values are ever sacrificed. But just as Jesus came to serve, not to be served (“the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,” Mark 10:45), and taught that we should treat our enemies with respect, the principle is that we should always seek to be a blessing to everyone.

This applies in a special way to the way we communicate with each other. We should make it a principle always to uplift and encourage ourselves and others with our thoughts, words, and actions.

“Forgetting self, help the many who are within reach around you. Talk faith, and your faith will increase. . . . Walk so that your life will reflect rays of light to others. Confide in the love of Jesus, and you will have grace to save perishing souls. Your path will be as the path of the just—a ‘shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.’” —(*Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1903) *Reflecting Christ*, p. 235.

John 15:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:2; John 15:5.

“Public Victory in Christ 2”

PRINCIPLE: SEEK TO UNDERSTAND BEFORE BEING UNDERSTOOD

“Most of the successful people I’ve known are the ones who do more listening than talking.” —Bernard Baruch.

But understanding is more than just listening; sometimes it is necessary to restate the other person’s primary points. Here are some good listening tips:

- Focus fully on the speaker, his or her body language, and other nonverbal cues.
- Avoid interrupting or trying to redirect the conversation to your concerns.
- Avoid seeming judgmental.
- Show genuine interest in what is being said.

The name “Christian” means that one is committed to representing Christ in his or her dealings with others. Amazing results will follow humble, genuine effort to reflect His character to others, as described here:

“While Christ will be glorified as the only Redeemer, there will be an overflow of gratitude from the saved for the human instrumentalities employed in their salvation. Their gratitude to those who rescued them will find expression in words like these: ‘I was pursuing a course that was a dishonor and an offense to my Redeemer; you manifested a love for my soul; you opened to me the Word of God. I was on the brink of ruin; your prayers, your tearful entreaties, your earnest interest, arrested my attention. I thought that you must have the truth or you would not be so earnest for the salvation of others. I read the Word of God for myself, and found that what you told me was the truth. I am saved, and I will praise my Redeemer for His matchless mercy and pardoning love.’

“Those who think they can do but little should improve every opportunity to do that little. It may be the smallest link in the longest chain. Separated from other influences, it may appear of little worth; but in God’s great chain of circumstances it may be the link which connects a soul to Heaven. All can do something if they will:...” —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 236.

God will constantly improve and enhance our abilities to bless others, but we need to make a conscious effort to polish the skills He has given us—for His glory.

1 John 5:4; Hebrews 10:19; Ephesians 5:1; Philippians 1:11; Matthew 5:16.

“Public Victory in Christ 3”

PRINCIPLE: SYNERGIZE

“It is amazing what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit.” –Susan K. Powell.

Or, better said, it is astonishing what can be accomplished when everyone is eager to give God the glory.

“Synergy” is defined as: The interaction of elements that when combined produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual elements, contributions, etc.

If we look around us in nature, we see synergy everywhere. From the simplest organism and plant to the immense galaxies, everything in the universe works in harmony and symmetry with everything else. What we see and what science discovers every day demonstrate the many sides of God’s character—power, infinite creativity, beauty, tender care, humor, love, providence, and holiness.

Man has the opportunity to experience a little bit of this as he cooperates with his fellow men. Much more can be accomplished by people working together on a project than could ever be achieved by their each working separately. This makes good sense, because everyone’s different talents and approaches to tasks, when combined, result in a completely unique result. Then, when supernatural power from Heaven’s infinite storehouse is added to human effort, warmth, beauty, love, and eternal purpose move man’s accomplishments into a whole new dimension.

So, even now, it is possible to experience that “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9.

Making such experiences here on earth is at the same time preparation for eternity, for such cooperation is with the very heavenly beings with whom the redeemed will live for all eternity!

2 Corinthians 5:15; Romans 1:17; Galatians 2:20; Titus 2:8; Psalm 29:2; Jeremiah 30:19.

“Every Choice Has an Influence on Others”

No Man Is An Island

No man is an island,
 Entire of itself,
 Every man is a piece of the continent,
 A part of the main.
 If a clod be washed away by the sea,
 Europe is the less.
 As well as if a promontory were.
 As well as if a manor of thy friend's
 Or of thine own were:
 Any man's death diminishes me,
 Because I am involved in mankind,
 And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
 It tolls for thee.

John Donne

“The importance of little things is underrated, just because they are small; but the influence of the little things for good or for evil is great.” —*The Youth's Instructor*, April 14, 1898.

“Every soul is surrounded by an atmosphere of its own—an atmosphere, it may be, charged with the life-giving power of faith, courage, and hope, and sweet with the fragrance of love. Or it may be heavy and chill with the gloom of discontent and selfishness, or poisonous with the deadly taint of cherished sin. By the atmosphere surrounding us, every person with whom we come in contact is consciously or unconsciously affected.

“This is a responsibility from which we cannot free ourselves. Our words, our acts, our dress, our deportment, even the expression of the countenance, has an influence. Upon the impression thus made there hang results for good or evil which no man can measure. Every impulse thus imparted is seed sown which will produce its harvest. It is a link in the long chain of human events, extending we know not whither. If by our example we aid others in the development of good principles, we give them power to do good. In their turn they exert the same influence upon others, and they upon still others. Thus by our unconscious influence thousands may be blessed.” —*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 339, 340.

One day each of us will find out how our influence affected others. But God will teach us how to use the gift of influence in the best possible way now if we will just ask Him to do so. In fact, the sooner we do this, the better, for time is upon us!

“To every one work has been allotted, and no one can be a substitute for another. Each one has a mission of wonderful importance, which he cannot neglect or ignore, as the fulfilment of it involves the weal of some soul, and the neglect of it the woe of one for whom Christ died.” —(*Review and Herald*, December 12, 1893) *Christian Service*, p. 10.

“We are Christ’s representatives upon the earth. How do we fulfill our mission? Christ’s representatives will be in daily communion with Him. Their words will be select, their speech seasoned with grace, their hearts filled with love, their efforts sincere, earnest, persevering, to save souls for whom Christ has died. Let all do their utmost to work for the salvation of the dear children and youth, and by and by they will listen with joy to the words of Jesus, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ What is this joy? It is beholding the redeemed saints saved through their instrumentality, through the blood of Jesus Christ.” —(SSW July 1, 1885) *Daughters of God*, p. 88.

“My Mission”

“The Lord has appointed to every person talents, great or small, according to his ability. Each individual has a mission to fulfill which involves weal or woe to some other soul. If faithful to his trust, he is a light that shines to God’s glory; by his Christian example, his constancy and fidelity, he represents Christ to the world.” —*Review and Herald*, April 24, 1883.

No profession, no occupation, no calling in this world is as important as the mission to which Heaven has called each individual. And—for sure—every single person has his own individual mission. God has given him specific talents, location, circumstances, and timing for carrying out that mission.

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah 6:8.

“What are you doing? God has given every man his work, and you are not to look to others; you are to look to your Master—to Him who has called you to His service.” —*General Conference Daily Bulletin*, March 20, 1891.

Now is the time. If you do not yet know what your mission is, ask Him! The place where He wants you to be is the place where you will be happiest and most fulfilled.

Furthermore, this world is not our home. Therefore, take the warning seriously: Be careful not to get too comfortable in this world, for circumstances can and will change quickly!

“We must keep separate from the world, if we would have the love of God abide with us. As soon as we begin to be conformed to this world, just so soon God’s Spirit begins to depart from us. But if we keep humble, live holy, harmless and separate from sinners, we shall see of the salvation of God. Let us strive to be Christians (Christ-like) in every sense of the word, and let our dress, conversation and actions preach that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, and that we are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus.” —*Review and Herald*, June 10, 1852.

“Joseph”

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“Moses”

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“Peter”

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“Jacob”

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“John”

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“David”

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“Daniel”

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“Paul”

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“God’s Team—for Eternity”

We have been working in teams for the last few days. Following are some qualities of top teams. How has your team functioned in these areas?

TOP 10 QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE TEAM

- Effective communication
- Strong leadership
- Efficient delegation
- Conflict management
- Trust
- Common goals
- Respect
- Togetherness
- Avoiding negativity
- Setting a good example

When God is the Team Leader, special things happen. Consider carefully how His team functions in each of the above areas.

Look at the following Bible verses to see what is very special about God’s eternal team! (This is essential, because not one sin can exist in His holy presence!)

“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” 2 Peter 3:14.

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be My son.” Revelation 21:7.

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.” Revelation 15:2.

“Victory Now and Forever”

In terms of victory, what does now have to do with forever?

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.

“Here is a promise that is for every one of you. If you live on the plan of addition, adding grace to grace, you are growing up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and you may find in this promise an eternal life-insurance policy. This is a promise that will stand the test. It is worth far more than any life-insurance policy that can be purchased with money. It is a policy that has been provided by God Himself in giving His only beloved Son that through belief in Him, through accepting of His great sacrifice, you may obtain everlasting life. Having gained the victory, you may enter in through the gates of the city of God, and receive an immortal crown.” —*Peter’s Counsel to Parents*, p. 12.

“Sacrifice all to God. Lay all upon His altar—self, property, and all, a living sacrifice. It will take all to enter glory. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where no thief can approach or rust corrupt. Ye must be partakers of Christ’s sufferings here if ye would be partakers with Him of His glory hereafter.

“Heaven will be cheap enough, if we obtain it through suffering. We must deny self all along the way, die to self daily, let Jesus alone appear, and keep His glory continually in view.

“The work of salvation is not child’s play, to be taken hold of at will and let alone at pleasure. It is the steady purpose, the untiring effort, that will gain the victory at last. It is he who endureth to the end that shall be saved. It is they who patiently continue in well-doing that shall have eternal life and the immortal reward.” —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 359.

The gift of God is eternal life, but only those who want this gift more than anything else will receive it. And only those who have the mind of Christ—“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am” (John 17:24)—will want to be in that holy place!

There is no guesswork to this, for Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand.” John 17:27-29.

“Eternal Victory in Christ”

After one has secured private victory through the grace of Jesus Christ, he is ready for public victory through the indwelling Saviour, able to represent Him and cooperate with Him in His holy mission. Eternal victory maintains and advances that holy walk.

PRINCIPLE: SHARPEN THE SAW

The picture is of a woodsman cutting down a tree in the forest. For him to do the work effectively and well, he needs to have the best possible tool—a sharp saw. But with use the saw becomes dull; trying to continue with a dull saw would mean that the woodsman must work much harder for inferior results. Therefore, periodically he stops his work and sharpens his saw.

The Christian leader’s tools are his health, his scriptural knowledge and skill, his spiritual mind, his moral character, and his walk with and trust in God. These tools all need to be kept sharp and ready for work, at times requiring that one “Come ye yourselves apart . . . and rest a while.” Mark 6:31.

The concepts of “the slight edge” and “kaizen” show that small increments of positive change when continued consistently over time make a huge difference in the outcome.

In addition, “the happiness advantage” shows that having the mind of Christ—choosing to focus one’s thoughts on positive, joyful things (Philippians 4:8) and talking faith—leads to victory.

Such holy principles are not difficult to follow; but if one is careless and inconsistent in small things, the result after a some time will be very negative. In fact, studies have shown that only five percent of people gain the victory by making and continuing with such tiny changes in various areas of their lives.

All who make the decision to “walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory” (1 Thessalonians 2:12), will have personal, public, and eternal victory in Christ.

“Jacob”

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“Joseph”

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“Moses”

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“David”

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“Daniel”

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“John”

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“Peter”

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“Paul”

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“Good-Byes in a Connected World”

Not so many years ago, it was considered amazing when one could speak on a cell phone with someone in another country. Now people in all parts of the world can communicate with others almost instantly in many different ways—email, cell phone, Skype, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter.

Thus, it is true that saying, “Good-by!” means we will separate from each other. But we will still be able to see each other on Skype and FaceTime. This is very different from what it was like a hundred years ago when a boat trip would take people far away from each other and they would not see each other for months, years, or maybe ever again. Even letters would take months to reach a loved one.

But today, an email reaches the other person’s email box in 30 seconds. And an airplane trip takes you halfway around the world in a day or so and brings you back home whenever you wish.

This connected world is a blessing. And it will very likely play an important role in wrapping up this world’s history. How long will it take for the entire world to hear the final message when the final events unfold? About ten minutes.

Now the question is, Are Christian young people today prepared for what is just ahead? After all, they will be the ones appearing before kings and presidents. This present generation is very familiar with such rapid communication, so God will use them in a very special way—if they love Him deeply—to accomplish His finishing work.

So, take to heart the principles learned here and practice them while there is still opportunity. And, beyond staying in touch with your friends, be in constant touch with your Best Friend, Jesus Christ. Keep watching what is going on around the world; and while you are watching, use your talents and influence to call others to repentance and trust in the Almighty, the King of the universe.

As we part, let all praise, honor, and glory be to Jesus Christ, who has this world in His mighty hands.

“Go, Tell Your Brethren”

“Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, . . .”
Mark 5:19.

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:35-37.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” Ephesians 6:10-13.

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.” Proverbs 3:5, 6.

“Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” Mark 13:33-37.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, © 1989 Franklin Covey Co., Free Press/Simon & Schuster, New York, NY

Shawn Achor, *The Happiness Advantage*, Copyright © 2010 Shawn Achor, Crown Publishing Group/Random House, Inc., New York, NY

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH, REFORM MOVEMENT
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY
GENERAL CONFERENCE YOUTH DEPARTMENT
625 West Avenue / Cedartown, Georgia 30125, U.S.A.
info@sda1844.org / www.uponhighplaces.org
770-748-0077

“The cost of the redemption of the race can never be fully realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer, by the throne of God. And as they have capacity to appreciate the value of immortal life, and the eternal reward, they will swell the song of victory and immortal triumph, ‘Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature,’ says John, ‘which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.’” —*Confrontation*, pp. 55, 56.