



The General Conference
Sabbath School &
Personal Ministries



TO

MOTIVATING MEMBERS TO WITNESS

SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST[®] CHURCH 

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Sabbath School & Personal Ministries Department

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MOTIVATING MEMBERS TO WITNESS

Introduction

Watch as two men visit with John the Baptist. The Saviour passes nearby. John, unable to find words to describe the matchless Son of God, blurts out, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29, KJV). John’s two disciples leave him immediately to follow Jesus. They listen to His every word, so tender, so appealing—the answer to every need. His love for the lost is contagious. Excusing themselves from that divine encounter, they hasten to share with Peter and James. They cannot be hindered. They must introduce Jesus to others.

Today, we must do it. Every member must do it. And why shouldn’t we?

God’s messenger to His remnant church, Ellen White, whom we will quote often throughout this booklet, said, “No more could a soul who possesses Christ be hindered from confessing Him than could the waters of Niagara [a mighty waterfall] be stopped from flowing over the falls.”¹

“The same intensity of desire to save sinners that marked the life of the Saviour marks the life of His true followers. The Christian has no desire to live for self. He delights to consecrate all that he has and is to the Master’s service.”²

In this secular age, an irresistible sense of urgency must grip the heart of every member. It is far past the time for the Laodicean lukewarm business-as-usual approach. Every member needs a passion, a passion for souls as:

Moses, who pled with God to either forgive their sin, or “blot me . . . out of the book” (Exodus 32:32, NIV).

Paul, who said, “Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:16, KJV).

Jesus, who wept over a doomed city, “Oh, Jerusalem, . . .how often would I have gathered thy children together” (Matthew 23:37, KJV).

John Knox, who proclaimed, “Give me Scotland or I die.”

Henry Martyn, landing on the shores of India, who cried, “Here let me burn out for God.”

A prisoner who said to a chaplain, “If I believed your gospel were true, I would crawl across England on broken glass to tell men about it.”

In the 21st century, when Christ’s return is imminent, shouldn’t Seventh-day Adventists, be gripped by a more intense passion to save souls than were Moses, Paul, Knox, Martyn, and others of history?

Witnessing to save souls is the solemn priority of God’s remnant church.

“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.”³

The church was established for this purpose: “All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ.”⁴

The work will never be finished until God’s people are motivated and involved.

“The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.”⁵

Finishing the work is possible if every one were a living missionary: “Were every one of you a living missionary, the message for this time would speedily be proclaimed in all countries, to every people and nation and tongue. This is the work that must be done before Christ shall come in power and great glory.”⁶

Good news. The work will be finished with lightning speed: “The bright light going among the living creatures with the swiftness of lightning represents the speed with which this work will finally go forward to completion.”⁷

God’s work will be finished! Motivation of church members to witness is happening around the world.

How is it done? If it is your desire to foster total involvement of your membership in sharing Jesus and His message for this time, here are

21 SECRETS OF MOTIVATING MEMBERS TO WITNESS:

1. Love.

“It is the Saviour’s love that constrains the messenger to bear the message to the lost.”⁸ When Paul caught a glimpse of the love of Jesus for the lost he said, “The love of Christ leaves us no choice” but to share it (2 Corinthians 5:14, NEB). “For the love of Christ controls and urges and impels us” (Amplified Bible). A clear picture of Christ’s love for a soul gave the early church one purpose for existence. They endured poverty, persecution, and death to “ring doorbells.” Notice how contemplating His love motivated Ellen White: “As I have thought of that cup trembling in the hands of Christ; as I have realized that He might have refused to drink, and left the world to perish in its sin, I have pledged that every energy of my life should be devoted to the work of winning souls to Him.”⁹

Share with the members the unfathomable love of Jesus for one person. Tell of the vastness of the universe that Jesus created. He left worlds in number as the sand on the sea shore that

were filled with creatures who loved and served him, to come to this one rebellious speck of dust in the universe to die for his enemies (Romans 5:8,10). Ask them to think of just one of their neighbors next door. Jesus would have died for him or her alone if there was no one else on earth.¹⁰ Ask them, “How can we *not* share Jesus with our neighbor?”

It is thrilling to know that: “Christ will impart to His messengers the same yearning love that He Himself has in seeking for the lost.”¹¹ Lead the members in prayer, claiming that promise, and urge them to do it daily concerning each person with whom they may share the love of Jesus.

Appealing to the members to share on the basis of the unfathomable love of Jesus, first, can be most productive.

2. Know other truths and remnant church history that motivate.

Members will be motivated to witness when they vividly discern and internalize the whole package of fundamental biblical truths and the history of God’s leading in the advent movement (in the light of the Great Controversy), and when they yield to the influence of the Holy Spirit upon their responsive hearts. Also, the act of sharing even a very limited knowledge of these truths will be found one of the greatest motivators to further sharing.

We will share, with comments, a few motivating statements by Ellen White:

- a. **Truth received into the heart motivates.** “If the truth is received in the heart, and valued as a heavenly gift, it will be a working element, that will work from the heart, and its workings will be apparent in the outward life.”¹² Sanctification through the truth produces the desire to share: “A Christian indeed will grow in knowledge of the truth; and as he is sanctified through the truth he will become more and more like Jesus, and more desirous to save souls, the purchase of his blood.”¹³
- b. **The shortness of time, the judgment, and Christ’s soon return motivate.** “If our ministers [and it should

apply to members as well] realized how soon the inhabitants of the world are to be arraigned before the judgment seat of God, . . . how earnestly they would work together with God to present the truth! How earnestly they would strive to lead men to accept the truth. How untiringly they would labor to advance God's cause in the world, proclaiming in word and deed, 'The end of all things is at hand.'"¹⁴ "We are now living in the closing scenes of this world's history. Let men tremble with the sense of the responsibility of knowing the truth. The ends of the world are come. Proper consideration of these things will lead all to make an entire consecration of all that they have and are to their God . . . all should be ambitious to do with fidelity, with an eye single to the glory of God, the sacred work which it is our exalted privilege to engage in."¹⁵

The following statement in context shows that failure in godly living and soul winning results from not having a "continual sense" of coming events: "We should have a continual sense of the shortness of time and of the fearful events which prophecy has declared must speedily take place. It is because these truths are not made a reality that the life is so inconsistent with the truth which we profess."¹⁶ That inconsistency results in hiding talents, in contrast with the example of Moses, who did not hide his talents, but was a faithful worker.

In her last message to the General Conference, Mrs. White indicated that a realization of the soon coming will motivate believers to labor: "We are rapidly approaching the end of this earth's history; and as we realize that Jesus is indeed coming soon, we shall be aroused to labor as never before."¹⁷ And in another place she said, "Because they know that the Lord is at the door, their zeal is quickened to co-operate with the divine intelligences in working for the salvation of souls."¹⁸

c. The spirit of the Three Angels' Messages motivates.

"When you are baptized with the third angel's message, the soul-purifying truth for this time will make a separation between you and the world that you have never yet experienced."¹⁹ "When the spirit of the third angel's message

takes hold upon the hearts of Seventh-day Adventists, there will be done a work that God can approve.”²⁰

- d. **The Laodicean message motivates.** In talking about working for souls, Ellen White says, “At this time the Laodicean message is to be given to arouse a slumbering church.”²¹ The basic purpose of Christ’s message to His last church is to arouse His slumbering people to the necessity of a personal relationship with Himself so they are enabled to give an effective witness that will aid in preparing a people for His soon coming. Only with a fervent relationship can they have the spirit of, and be enabled to give the Three Angels’ Messages.
- e. **The sanctuary message reveals an all-powerful Mediator—the Center of Motivation.** “The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith.... All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise, it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time, or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill.”²²

And that “position” involves outreach according to the next paragraph: “All who have received the light upon these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ’s work in behalf of men...The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God’s hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people.”²³

Along with the “system of truth,” it brings to view, it shows the “position and work” of the membership. They cannot occupy the position that God designs them to fill without understanding the message. Nor can they have faith in their ever-present all-powerful Mediator that is so essential to reaching every person. It is the privilege of every member

to reach up by faith into the Most Holy Place, the power spot of the universe, and take hold of the power of Jesus that is a necessity in reaching out to others.

The conviction that prophetic time ended in 1844 also provides dynamic and urgency to world mission. Although no direct statement was found stating specifically that the sanctuary motivates members to witness, the study of the central truth revealing their Creator-Saviour-Mediator-Friend at the power spot of the universe should so inspire believers with the privilege that they will connect with the power and go to work.

- f. **Understanding Zechariah 3 and 4 motivates.** “I entreat of you to read the third and fourth chapters of Zechariah. If these chapters are understood, if they are received, a work will be done for those who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness, a work that means to the church: ‘Go forward and upward.’”²⁴
- g. **Understanding fulfilled prophecy motivates.** “As we see the fulfillment of prophecy, our faith in the final triumph of Christ’s kingdom should strengthen; and we should go forth with renewed courage to do our appointed work.”²⁵
- h. **Experiencing the truth about conversion, consecration, and “partaking of the divine nature” motivates.** Here are six points:
 - (1) Thorough conversion is essential to a burden for souls: “Many will not feel the burden of souls until they are thoroughly converted and copy the Pattern, Jesus Christ.”²⁶
 - (2) Reconversion is needed in large centers before the “necessity” can be felt. “Many who are living in our large centers need to be reconverted; and until they are reconverted, they can never feel the necessity of giving to the scattered sheep the message for this time.”²⁷
 - (3) Converting power needs to take hold to enable one to see the need: “Let us remember that pro-

fession is nothing unless we have the truth in the heart. We need the converting power of God to take hold of us, that we may understand the needs of a perishing world.”²⁸

- (4) If consecrated, they would hear the voice of God saying, “Go.” “There are a large number who, if they would come near enough to God by entire consecration, would hear His voice saying, ‘Go labor in My vineyard.’”²⁹
- (5) Consecration brings coveting to have a part in God’s work. “Were the life hid with Christ in God, his service would be no drudgery. If the whole heart were consecrated to God, all would find something to do, and would covet a part in the work.”³⁰
- (6) One who partakes of “the divine nature,” through daily communion with God, values each soul, loves each, and works perseveringly as Christ did. Notice the mild command, “This is the spirit that should be encouraged” that is included here:

“The love of God revealed for man is beyond any human computation; it is infinite. And the human being who is a partaker of the divine nature will love as Christ loves, will work as he worked. The love that is inspired by the love we have for Jesus will see in every soul, rich or poor, a value that cannot be measured by human estimate. The world sinks into insignificance in comparison with the value of one soul. This love can exist, and be kept pure, refined, and holy, only through the love in the soul for Jesus Christ, nourished by daily communion with God. There will be an inborn compassion and sympathy which will not fail nor be discouraged. This is the spirit that should be encouraged to live in every heart, and be revealed in every life.”³¹

Ephesus is an example to the church today:

The experience possible to the remnant who are totally converted and consecrated, and who partake of the divine nature through a daily relationship of communion with God can be illustrated by the following list of seventeen points from the early experience of the church of Ephesus. These are taken from one statement:

- (a) There was a childlike simplicity and fervor.
- (b) A lively, earnest, heartfelt love for Christ was expressed. The believers rejoiced in the love of God. . . .
- (c) Christ was in their hearts as an abiding presence. . . .
- (d) The believers sought earnestly to receive and obey every word of God.
- (e) Filled with love for their Redeemer, they sought as their highest aim to win souls to Him.
- (f) They did not think of hoarding the precious treasure of the grace of Christ.
- (g) They felt the importance of their calling, and, weighted with the message, "Peace on earth, good will to men."
- (h) They burned with desire to carry the glad tidings to the earth's remotest bounds.
- (i) The members of the church were united in sentiment and action.
- (j) Love for Christ was the golden chain that bound them together.
- (k) They followed on to know the Lord more and still more perfectly, and
- (l) Brightness, comfort, and peace were revealed in their lives.
- (m) They visited the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and kept themselves unspotted from the world. A failure to do this would, in their view, have been a contradiction of their profession and a denial of their Redeemer.

- (n) In every city the work was carried forward.
- (o) Souls were converted, and in their turn felt that they must tell of the inestimable treasure.
- (p) They could not rest till the beams of light which had illumined their minds were shining upon others. Multitudes of unbelievers were made acquainted with the reason of the Christian's hope.
- (q) Warm, inspired, personal appeals were made.³²

We turn now to other major secrets of motivation.

3. *Pray.*

God is the best motivator. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.' These words teach us how the field is to be supplied with workers who will labor for the salvation of souls."³³ As a motivator, ask God daily to motivate certain individuals. Then urge them to claim from Jesus His love for souls, as stated above, to give themselves to God for the saving of the lost, and to claim the daily baptism of the Holy Spirit. He will motivate (see *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 21).

They can do this alone, in teams of two or three, and in small prayer groups composed of witnessing members. Establish prayer groups composed of members with limited ability or time to become personally involved. However, the most effective groups and individuals are those who are able, willing, and are becoming involved in outreach.

Encourage each to pray daily, "Who today, Lord?" As they plan, work, and pray, He will bring them into contact with those best suited to their talents (see *Welfare Ministry*, p. 101). A sense of God's working through them, enabling them with courage, wisdom, and success in changing lives will greatly motivate to continued action.

4. *Share the joy of witnessing.*

Witnessing becomes contagious when even one person in a Sabbath School class or Action Unit shares the joy of witnessing—how God became very real as He worked through him or her.

Nothing succeeds like success. When members hear of the success of other members like themselves, they want to experience the same joy and want to have a part.

As the member shares, it helps to eliminate two prevalent fears that enslave most fellow members: “No one will listen to me,” and “I wouldn’t know what to say.” A witnessing story told by an inexperienced new or older member is much more effective in motivating others than one told by a paid pastor.

When members experience results from following an outreach plan and relate their joy in following it, others will usually listen and decide to join in the activity more readily than when the pastor or appointed leader promotes it.

Consistently listen for and utilize every success story possible in the Sabbath School class and program, during the worship service, in newsletters, on bulletin boards, in the church bulletin, etc. A well-planned or spontaneous interview tailored to motivate others, presented during the worship service—preferably just before the sermon, when all are present, can be very effective. The appeal can be enhanced with the use of a response card. Motivate by making full use of the joy that comes from sharing Jesus.

5. Be enthusiastic.

“In proportion to the enthusiasm and perseverance with which the work is carried forward will be the success given.”³⁴ Someone has said, “It is attitude that determines your altitude.” Members will not get excited if the leaders are not excited.

6. Stress the “privilege” first and “responsibility” second.

The duty and responsibility of every member to become involved in witnessing, and also the results of failure to do so are emphatically stressed in the Spirit of Prophecy. (These important statements will be shared near the end of this booklet, so that they could, perhaps, be used more wisely). But the joy and benefits of sharing are also underscored by Ellen White.

Certainly God has given every child of His freedom of choice. He does not force people to witness and therefore we should not

force anyone either. Beating people over the head with strong statements is usually not the most effective first approach to motivate. In His approach to man, God usually uses the good news first and then shares the bad news. One example of this is found in the Three Angels' Messages. They begin with the good news for the obedient and end with the bad news for the disobedient.

We suggest that balance is needed in motivating members to witness. It can most often best be accomplished by interviewing joyous, often untalented, soul winners who share their success stories. By emphasizing the truths mentioned above and the privilege and benefits of working together with God in the most exciting and important work available to man, we can usually most effectively encourage others to become involved. In English we call it good "PR" or "public relations." Here, "P" stands for "privilege" and "R" stands for "Responsibility". Begin with the privilege of witnessing and then share the responsibility of doing so. *(We realize, of course, that this acronym will probably not be able to be translated directly into another language, but it can be explained.)*

7. Aim at total involvement.

If beginning with virtual inactivity, this may seem impossible, but remember we are working with the God of the impossibles. "For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37, NIV). We are challenged: "Let the gospel ring through our churches, summoning them to universal action."³⁵ "If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world."³⁶ When the whole church works God works. When the whole church is working it becomes a safe and warm place for God to bring new people. And He often brings people that have not in any way been touched by the activities of the church. Here is an example: The entire church was involved in Sabbath School Action Units. Virtually everyone had chosen and was giving Bible studies. One Sabbath morning a lady with her hair stacked high in four colors appeared in Sabbath School. They asked her, "What brought you here?" She replied, "I decided to attend a Sunday-keeping church and when I was sitting in the pew, I heard a voice behind me. I looked and no one was there, but the voice said, 'Why are you in church on Sunday when the seventh day is the Sabbath?' That is

why I am here.” No one had contacted her, but when the whole church was working, God did. Members gave her Bible studies and she soon became the Sabbath school superintendent.

A second example: The church leadership in a country was aiming at total involvement of the membership in witnessing. As the layman trainer with two trainees approached a house with new Bible study guides, a man in front of the house saw them, rushed into the house, brought out his wife and said, “These are the people I saw in my dream and these are the lessons I saw in my dream.” The story of God’s approval of the new lessons lit a fire among the membership of that country that has continued for several decades (38 years at the time of this writing). Thousands of members have and continue to use them in giving Bible studies. The course became the primary soul-winning tool. Many thousands have been baptized. Thirty two years after God gave the dream to a man who was never baptized, although his wife was, 15,000 graduated in one graduation in one city from the same slightly updated Bible course. God works when the whole church works.

When the whole church works together for a common goal, through a composite of varied activities, great enthusiasm and excitement are generated. People enjoy being part of a successful united plan of action. For example: If the whole church focuses on preparing people for a specific harvesting event and follow up, it will motivate. We will discuss more details on that later.

As the work will never be finished until we all work together,³⁷ help all participants to get and keep a “Double Vision”—to work equally as hard at training others as in doing the work themselves. Someone has said that, “It is more important to train a soul winner than to win a soul.” We may be satisfied working by addition, but God longs to work by multiplication. Why not give Him a chance to succeed by aiming at total involvement?

8. Use a simple plan.

The very simplest modes combined with united action equals results. “The very simplest modes of work should be devised and set in operation among the churches. If the members will unitedly accept such plans, and perseveringly carry them out, they will reap a rich reward; for their experience will grow brighter, their

ability will increase, and through their efforts souls will be saved.”³⁸ One of our greatest soul winners says that our membership would triple in just five years by using a very simple method: Each member does intentional evangelism. Each prays earnestly and selects ten people, perhaps from his/her territorial assignment, makes friends with them, keeps them in prayer and works diligently to win them. Certainly it should be very easy to baptize two out of the ten in five years.

9. Use a participation form.

To give every member an opportunity to participate, in launching an outreach plan it has proven very effective to preach on the love of Christ for the lost, make an appeal, and then pass out a participation form that includes all the activities in which people are needed to make the plan successful. Have prayer together and go over the form step by step together, asking the members to mark what they would like to do. They may be asked to put a number “1” by their first choice, a number “2” by their second choice, etc. Collect the form before dismissal. Usually most, many of whom have never participated, are motivated to do something.

10. Engage participants in planning, goal setting, and evaluation.

People take better care of their own babies than the babies of others. When they own the plan, having formulated it, and set specific goals and target dates, they are much more likely to carry out their plan and reach their goals than if told what to do. And the good news is that when the members make their own plans and set their own goals they are motivated to set them much higher than envisioned by the leaders, or when they are told what to do.

Guidance and encouragement can, of course, be given by leaders as plans are developed. Members should write out the details of their outreach plans and give a copy to the pastor and personal ministries leader. Then, with a written plan in hand, leaders can more successfully train participants as they will be eager to know what do to make their own plan successful. Helping each to feel a needed part of a larger cultivation, sowing, harvesting, and possible church planting vision also motivates.

Review together and evaluate your progress often. Successful Sabbath School Action Units, for example, review their plan weekly and have monthly evaluations in home fellowship meetings to constantly sharpen their plans. These exciting times motivate to greater action.

11. Work together toward target dates and provide rest periods.

As indicated above, total involvement in working towards specific target dates can be very motivating. Let's use the evangelistic cycle as an example. If an evangelistic reaping meeting is planned to begin, say, May 15, individual members, or, preferably, Sabbath School Action Units or other small groups, can be inspired to work diligently toward that date in anticipation of a harvest. They can begin January 1 with cultivating friendships and various cultivation activities, such as community service projects, Bible study advertising, etc., and begin sowing with Bible studies by February 15, so that interests can be prepared for a graduation the first night of the month long harvesting meetings beginning May 15. (The meetings will basically be a review of the message they have already studied in their homes. With that preparation they will be able to make intelligent lasting decisions during the meetings).

June 16 to July 15 could be a rest period and cultivation and sowing could possibly begin again July 16 for another reaping meeting in November. In this way two evangelistic cycles could be conducted per year. Those newly baptized in May and June will be so motivated to share with their friends, family, work associates, and neighbors that the activities of the second half of the year will be much easier and probably more productive as well.

12. Conduct regularly scheduled support and training meetings that facilitate constant improvement.

Continual support and training are vital to maintain motivation. Just launching a program is not enough. A weekly meeting, bathed in prayer, conducted by the pastor or experienced soul winner is excellent. This essential meeting may be very short, but remember,

promptness and regularity help to prevent discouragement. When people get discouraged it becomes more difficult to motivate them. Certain ones may have had a difficult experience. First share successes and then challenges. When those who have had a difficult experience hear the success of others they will be encouraged. As each experience is shared, ask, "What can we learn from this?" The leader of the meeting does not answer and lecture, but involves all present and, with constant interaction and input, elaborates on the good points suggested by each person. Everyone who shares thoughts and successes is motivated. When others in the group share how they met the same challenges in the past, the ones with the new challenges gain ideas as to how to move forward. Base any instruction needed on the needs expressed. Keep it simple and pertinent to the coming week's activities.

Stay very close together in the fellowship of service. Learn together from each other. Share successes and assist each other with challenges and all will be motivated.

13. Try to fit activities to abilities, but be careful—don't limit God.

Experience has taught that God increases the talents and abilities of people who work with Him far beyond man's expectation. The key is to depend on His wisdom and power. Gideon, the poor, uneducated thresher, is only one of many Bible examples. And examples are not limited to Bible times.

The trainer almost told the trainee to stop coming to the weekly Bible study for training. She was motivated to come along, but it was evident she did not have the ability. The trainer almost told her "You do not have the gift required to give Bible studies." The trainer went to another country to do training for three years. What a surprise it was to him when he returned to find that the lady had had seven baptisms from her Bible study work and was a full time Literature Evangelist.

We are told, "The Lord imparts a fitness for the work to every man and woman who will co-operate with divine power. All the requisite talent, courage, perseverance, faith, and tact will come

as they put the armor on.”³⁹ Often abilities are not seen until a person is involved in the activity. Here is another example:

John had been a member for eight years and had never done anything in church. Members said he had never opened his mouth in church. But he was praised as a fantastic small group leader after his first try.

It is good to discover our spiritual gifts and use them in the church. Fitting activities to abilities certainly can motivate, but remember, abilities increase by exercise. Many do not discover they have the ability until they are challenged to try an activity that requires them to stretch, trusting God to help them.

14. Recognize that “Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin.”⁴⁰

That counsel continues: “There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors. Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people and others, uniting with them, will learn from their example.”⁴¹ Team those who have the greatest experience with those who have none.

Experience has shown that instead of preaching at members about their responsibility, twisting arms, or forcing them, it is better to simply expose them to the joys of doing it. The best way to do it is to do it. If they try it they like it and soon love it. So, say, “Come, go with me. You don’t have to do anything but smile.” (Even some who couldn’t smile have become very successful).

A trainer-trainee plan with on-the-job training can be one of the best methods of motivation. Jesus, the greatest motivator, took members with Him and showed them how to work. Fear of failure evaporates with this method. Members find that the activity is not difficult. It is much easier than anticipated.

For example, in giving Bible studies, in class, as the trainer, tell them, the trainees, how to do what needs to be done that day. (Limit the instruction to the activity of that day only.) Demonstrate how to do it, let them practice and then take them out and do it together. Once out there, begin with asking them to watch you as you do it. Then give them a small portion. Gradually, week by

week, increase their part, watching and encouraging them, until they are doing the whole thing. Always express appreciation for every success and improvement, tactfully discuss how they could do it better, then nudge them out of the nest, make them trainers and continue to support them as needed.

Caution: Experience has shown that the devil loves to keep potential soul winners in training classes and seminars, to the exclusion of actual practice in real life. He hates to see members out sharing the message. Don't let him succeed in keeping your people from the work for which they are training. Stick to a schedule.

Basic format of the three-hour weekly on-the-job training classes:

- a. 10-15 minutes in devotional study and prayer, giving everyone the opportunity to pray.
- b. 20-30 minutes in practical instruction and role-playing geared to that day's activity.
- c. 1-2 hours working door-to-door. This most important time must be protected.
- d. 20 minutes in afterglow learning from experiences received. (Sometimes this will need to be done the following week). Trainees share and trainer helps all to learn from successes and challenges.

A weekly "On-the-Job Witnessing Class," in every church, conducted by the pastor or experienced person would be a vital asset to motivation and success. It would also aid compliance with the instruction, "Every church should be a training school for Christian workers."⁴²

It is equally important to train a soul winner as to win a soul. Every member needs the spiritual experience obtained from sharing Jesus and His message and the challenge of reaching the world. Advise and motivate those giving Bible studies alone to become trainers and to, if possible, never give a Bible study alone. Always take a trainee. Both will be blessed.

15. Teach successful methods.

Members are motivated by success. Many need to be taught the proper methods that will bring success. Some unsuccessful

members hit people with the Sabbath or other requirements before introducing them to a loving Saviour, leading them to accept Him as Saviour and Lord, and then step by step into what He asks them to do, including the testing truths. We are told, “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good, . . . ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”⁴³ With some it takes longer to win their confidence than with others. Each person is different. Constant communication with the Holy Spirit will bring success. He is the only one who knows exactly how to lead each person. Here are a few general methods to teach members that will enhance success and thus motivate them to attempt greater things for God.

Teach them:

- a. To constantly claim Christ’s love for souls and the power, wisdom, and continual guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- b. Christian graces and mannerisms—how to be kind and tactful.
- c. How to watch for interests daily and cultivate friendships.
- d. How to use the tones of the voice properly.
- e. How to start a visit with FORT—Family, Occupation, Religion, and Testimony.
- f. How to develop and use their testimony in various situations.
- g. How to cultivate or develop interests through media interests (e.g. *Voice of Prophecy*, *It Is Written*, etc.), literature evangelist interests, other interests, and how to use surveys.
- h. The importance of and how to listen.
- i. How to disagree agreeably and never argue.
- j. How to prepare for, start, and give Bible studies.
- k. How to mark the Bible for witnessing.
- l. How to make each study Christ-centered.

- m. The importance of, and how to get a decision for Christ before teaching the testing truths.
- n. How to obtain and use effective illustrations.
- o. How to tactfully get decisions.
- p. How to deal with specific objections and difficult texts.
- q. How to reclaim former members.

16. Keep materials available.

Nothing can retard motivation more than when the particular witnessing activity necessitates the utilization of certain materials and they are suddenly unavailable. It is very discouraging. Keep needed Bible study guides, tracts, etc. that are being used available at all times in the most visible places. Keep them neatly arranged in little compartments in a cabinet, again, in the most visible place possible in the lobby of the church. Make them available in Sabbath school classes, in Action Units each Sabbath, and in any other appropriate location so that workers are not disappointed. Order supplies early so that motivation is maintained.

17. Utilize the “command” appropriately.

Now we come to the gospel commission—the “command” in Matthew 28:19-20, and other similar words used by Ellen to motivate the membership. We have reserved the following Ellen White statements until near the end of this leaflet. Certainly it would not be wise to use these pointed statements to beat people over the head. But they should be used, and used appropriately.

Both love and the command to duty must be stressed. Nothing God has inspired to be written is overdone or underdone. The creatures of the Creator of the universe would be wise to accept and follow “all the Lord has said.” Failures in motivation in recent times could have resulted from an approach that has been lopsided on the side of love alone because of being scared of legalism.

At times, the following pointed statements could, perhaps, best be put to use to motivate the motivator. Due to space limitations, many are very brief. Some are very intense and emphatic and they are often more emphatic when read in context. The reader is

encouraged to read them in their setting. We will endeavor to list in the order of intensity a sampling of sixteen points related to “the command.”

Wake up. “There are those among us who could work if they were awake to the wants of the cause.”⁴⁴

Should. “Every soul should take an active part in advancing the cause of God. Whatever our calling, as Christians we have a work to do in making Christ known to the world. We are to be missionaries, having for our chief aim the winning of souls to Christ.”⁴⁵

Expects. “Our General, who has never lost a battle, expects willing, faithful service from everyone who has enlisted under His banner.”⁴⁶

Present and urge. Many do not work, because ministers neglected an essential.

“I have been shown that many do not take hold of the missionary work because the matter has not been presented before them and urged upon their attention by the ministers who have labored in their behalf. These ministers have neglected one essential part of their duty, and as the result hundreds are indifferent and idle who might be at work had they been more perfectly instructed.”⁴⁷

“The great missionary field is open to men and the subject must be agitated, agitated, again and again.”⁴⁸

God is Robbed. “We are to encourage souls, to attract them, and thus win them to the Saviour. If this is not our interest, if we withhold from God the service of heart and life, we are robbing Him of influence, of time, of money and effort. In failing to benefit our fellow men, we rob God of the glory that should flow to Him through the conversion of souls.”⁴⁹

Necessity. If the necessity of work were understood, hundreds would respond.

“Has a line of labor been devised and placed before them in such a way that each has seen the necessity of taking part in the work?”⁵⁰

“If all would realize the necessity of doing to the utmost of their ability in the work of God, having a deep love for souls, feeling the burden of the work upon them, we should see hundreds engaged as active workers who have been hitherto dull and uninterested, accomplishing nothing.”⁵¹

Responsibility. Privilege necessitates responsibility.

- a. “It is a wonderful privilege to be able to understand the will of God as revealed in the sure word of prophecy. This places on us a heavy responsibility. God expects us to impart to others the knowledge that He has given us. It is His purpose that divine and human instrumentalities shall unite in the proclamation of the warning message.”⁵²
- b. “We should now feel the responsibility of laboring with intense earnestness to impart to others the truths that God has given for this time. We cannot be too much in earnest.”⁵³
- c. “I call upon the church to pray earnestly that you may understand your responsibilities. Are you individually laborers together with God? If not, why not? When do you mean to do your heaven-appointed work?”⁵⁴
- d. All must have “a keen sense of the responsibility resting upon them individually.”⁵⁵

Duty. It is the members’ “duty to be living, acting, working members of the church.”⁵⁶ “Not one who is a partaker of the divine nature will be indifferent in this matter. The world is our field; with a firm hold on God for his strength and his grace we may move forward in the pathway of duty, as co-laborers with the Redeemer of the world.”⁵⁷

Obligation. Failure to fulfill obligation is opposition. “The obligations which bind us to place our names on the

church roll hold us responsible to work to the utmost of our ability for God. He calls for undivided service, for the entire devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength. Christ has brought us into church capacity, that He may engage and engross all our capabilities in devoted service for the salvation of others. Anything short of this is opposition to the work.”⁵⁸

Must. Members must act now, and for their own benefit. “Children let your light shine forth to others. . . . We must not live for self, but be a blessing to others. . . . there is no time to be lost. We must work to get the message of warning before all we possibly can.”⁵⁹ “I was shown God’s people waiting for some change to take place—a compelling power to take hold of them. But they will be disappointed, for they are wrong. They must act, they must take hold of the work. . . .”⁶⁰

“God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid; but in order for us to develop a character like Christ’s, we must share in His work.”⁶¹

Accountable. God holds people accountable for His truth and for idleness. “God will hold such (many) accountable for the souls of their fellow-men. They might have done a good work in union with Christ, and they will be called to render an account for the good to souls they could have done and did not.”⁶² “Laymen cannot meet the accountability and be idle.”⁶³ “Our accountability to heaven should cause us to fear and tremble.”⁶⁴

Guilty. Neglect of persevering personal effort makes one guilty before God. “If we neglect this personal effort and do not habitually and perseveringly urge upon the sinner his danger, we are guilty before God.”⁶⁵

Demands. God demands service of every soul—not just missionaries. “There are some who are willing to go to the ends of the earth in order to carry the light of truth to men, but God demands that every soul who knows the truth shall seek to win others to the love of the truth. If we are not willing to make special sacrifices in order to save souls

that are ready to perish, how can we be counted worthy to enter into the city of God?"⁶⁶

Our great sin. Members' failure to impart is our great sin. It leads to degeneration. "God has given His ministers the message of truth to proclaim. This the churches are to receive and in every possible way to communicate, catching the first rays of light and diffusing them. Here is our great sin. ...The ability God has given, if not exercised, degenerates. . . . your Redeemer and all the holy angels are grieved. . . ." ⁶⁷

Judged. God's people will be judged for neglect and must meet the souls neglected. "In the judgment you must meet the souls you have neglected. In that great day you will be self-convicted and self-condemned. May the Lord lead you now to repentance."⁶⁸

Eternal life at stake. Failure to heed the command— "Go ye"— results in a failure to hear the "well done!" "There are hundreds and thousands who can work if they are so disposed. Up to the present time they have done nothing but serve themselves. This class of do-nothings and know-nothings, as far as the work to be done in God's cause is concerned, will never hear the well done from the lips of the Majesty of Heaven."⁶⁹ "That any one can be saved in indolence and inactivity is an utter impossibility."⁷⁰

18. Stress blessings promised.

We turn now to just a few of the tremendous blessings promised in the writings of Ellen White to those who work with Christ in witnessing. There are so many blessings promised in every line or two that it is too difficult to put captions on them all. We can only praise God for the richness promised and work and pray to help every member receive their benefits.

"As he imparts of the heavenly gifts, he makes room for fresh currents of grace and truth to flow into the soul from the living fountain. Greater light, increased knowledge and blessing, are his. In this work, which devolves upon every church member, is the life and growth of the church."⁷¹

“Let God’s workers. . . teach the truth in families, drawing close to those for whom they labor. If they thus cooperate with God, He will clothe them with spiritual power. Christ will guide them in their work, entering the houses of the people with them, and giving them words to speak that will sink deep into the hearts of the listeners. The Holy Spirit will open hearts and minds to receive the rays coming from the Source of all light.”⁷²

“He [the Lord] will guide them into the homes of these who need and desire the truth, bringing them into the situations best suited to their talents. And as the servants of God engage in the work of seeking the lost sheep, their spiritual faculties are awakened and energized. Knowing that they are in harmony with God, they feel joyous and happy. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they obtain an experience that is invaluable to them. Their intellectual and moral powers attain their highest development.”⁷³

“When men use their powers as God directs, their talents will increase, their ability will enlarge, and they will have heavenly wisdom in seeking to save the lost.”⁷⁴

We used this statement before, but it is very appropriate here. “The Lord imparts a fitness for the work to every man and woman who will co-operate with divine power. All the requisite talent, courage, perseverance, faith, and tact will come as they put the armor on.”⁷⁵

“Talents used are talents multiplied. . . . The Lord desires us to use every gift we have; and if we do this, we shall have greater gifts to use. . . . By every wholehearted, earnest sacrifice for the Master’s service our powers will increase. . . . While we yield ourselves as instruments for the Holy Spirit’s working, the grace of God works in us to deny old inclinations, to overcome powerful propensities, and to form new habits. As we cherish and obey the promptings of the Spirit, our hearts are enlarged to receive more and more of His power, and to do more and better work. Dormant energies are aroused, and palsied faculties receive new life. . . . The humble worker who obediently re-

sponds to the call of God may be sure of receiving divine assistance. To accept so great and holy a responsibility is itself elevating to the character. It calls into action the highest mental and spiritual powers, and strengthens and purifies the mind and heart. Through faith in the power of God, it is wonderful how strong a weak man may become, how decided his efforts, how prolific of great results. He who begins with a little knowledge, in a humble way, and tells what he knows, while seeking diligently for further knowledge, will find the whole heavenly treasure awaiting his demand. The more he seeks to impart light, the more light he will receive. The more one tries to explain the word of God to others, with a love for souls, the plainer it becomes to himself. The more we use our knowledge and exercise our powers, the more knowledge and power we shall have. . . . Every effort made for Christ will react in blessing upon ourselves. If we use our means for His glory, He will give us more. As we seek to win others to Christ, bearing the burden of souls in our prayers, our own hearts will throb with the quickening influence of God's grace; our own affections will glow with more divine fervor; our whole Christian life will be more of a reality, more earnest, more prayerful."⁷⁶

"When church members put forth earnest efforts to advance the message, they will live in the joy of the Lord and will meet with success. Triumph always follows decided effort."⁷⁷

"The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be laborers together with God will triumph with it."⁷⁸

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:3, KJV). "What rejoicing there will be as these redeemed ones meet and greet those who have had a burden in their behalf! . . .—how their hearts will thrill with satisfaction!"⁷⁹

19. Contrast the blessings with the curses.

The “blessings” of being a laborer together with God are numerous. One can also easily find in the writings of the Lord’s messenger to his people many “curses” listed for not being one. Like Moses told Israel in Deuteronomy chapters 28 and 29 that if they did not love and obey the command of the Lord and be blessed they would be cursed. And he listed the curses. But we will just include this one statement that expresses the contrast. “Men and women may be co-workers with their self-sacrificing, self-denying Redeemer. In their unselfish efforts to do others good, they will be bearing his yoke and lifting his burdens. Thus they will find pure happiness and rich joys. Whoever accepts the invitation of Christ to bear his yoke and share his burdens will not only find the yoke easy but the burden light. Rest and peace is found in forgetfulness of self and in earnest, persevering efforts to save souls from the darkness of error. [In contrast] Those who shirk the responsibilities which Jesus would have them bear, choosing a life of self-indulgent ease, will be destitute of spiritual joys and divine peace, and cannot be partakers with Christ of his glory.”⁸⁰

20. Challenge them to add to Christ’s reward.

Members are often concerned about receiving stars in their crowns. What would happen if we lost sight of self in perfect love for our Saviour and focused on seeing that He gets His reward? “Do we consider our exalted privilege of adding a star to Christ’s crown—a soul cut loose from the chains with which Satan has bound him, a soul saved in the kingdom of God?”⁸¹

21. Persevere and God will give success.

Your positive, persevering attitude will motivate members. Urge them never to give up. Teach them to claim the promises of God and believe He will give them success. Train them to consider “problems” as “challenges” that can be met through claiming the unlimited power of the God of the work to which He has called them. There is nothing too hard for Him (Jeremiah. 32:17) who has already won the battle in the Great Controversy. Again, we are assured, “When church members put forth earnest efforts to ad-

vance the message, they will live in the joy of the Lord and will meet with success. Triumph always follows decided effort.”⁸²

Summary and Conclusion.

The urgent need for active, aggressive, continual witnessing on the part of every Seventh-day Adventist is inherent in his or her possession of the last warning message to a perishing world. The very reason for the existence of the church, its organization, its institutions, and its members is the proclamation of that message, making disciples prepared for Christ’s soon coming.

The church must be aroused to action. The hesitant must be motivated but not forced. In the ultimate analysis, we are told, “God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.”⁸³

We have endeavored here to share proven methods of motivation, relying heavily, in a balanced way, on the wisdom and instruction of the Originator and Commissioner of the message. We trust through earnest prayer and dependence upon the Holy Spirit’s leading in each situation that these will be helpful.

The tremendous blessings promised to the faithful witness and the alternative “curses” to the unfaithful should be a source of inspiration and motivation to all to follow God’s directives explicitly. In these end times His faithful ones will work untiringly and unitedly with Him in joyous anticipation of the finished task and the imminent glorious victory of God’s remnant church.

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