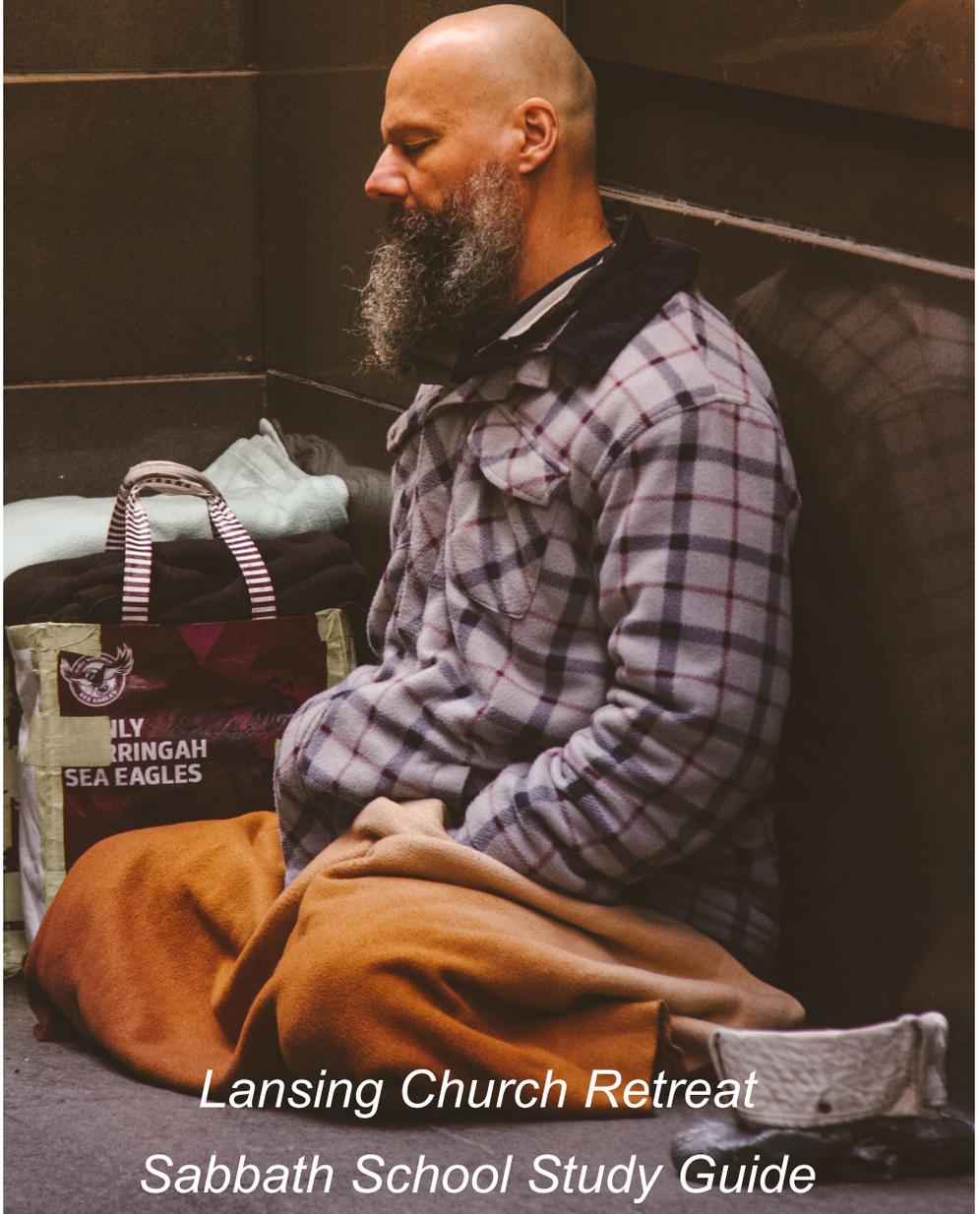


# The Gospel in Action



*Lansing Church Retreat  
Sabbath School Study Guide*

## Questions to briefly discuss before studying the following pages:

**Question 1:** Ministry of Healing pg 143 says that, “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people.” **What was Christ’s Method?**

The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy to them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, “follow Me.”

**Question 2:** If you were to guess the ratio of healing to teaching/preaching in Christ’s life, what would you say it is?

During His ministry, Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. MH 14.9

**Question 3:** What do you think the ratio in our church is? Is this “following Christ’s method?”

### Document to read and discuss:

Matthew 4 – 9 encapsulate what the ministry of Christ looked like. It **begins** with the phrase:

“And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.” Matthew 4:23

It **ends** with the same phrase:

“And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.” Matthew 9:35

This is what Jesus did, logically enough, that’s what he told his disciples to do in the next chapter.

“And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.’” Matthew 10:7

In between these two bookends, 4:23 and 9:35, Matthew gives us a glimpse into what the healing ministry of Christ looked like.

He begins with the sermon on the mount, Matthew 5-7, the synopsis of Christ's teaching/ministry. Then over the next several chapters, he records nine miraculous stories of healing. He makes it clear that these stories are just a sampling of many more healings that Christ did.

In every city, every town, every village through which he passed, with the solicitude of a loving father he laid his hands upon the afflicted ones, making them whole, and speaking words of tenderest sympathy and compassion. How precious to them were his words! From him flowed a stream of healing power, which made the sick whole. He healed men and women with unhesitating willingness and with hearty joyfulness; for he was glad to be able to restore suffering ones to health. Review and Herald June 9, 1904 - The Great Medical Missionary

**The healing ministry of Christ is what opened the doors of the cities He went to.**

The Saviour's work was not restricted to any time or place. His compassion knew no limit. On so large a scale did He conduct His work of healing and teaching that there was no building in Palestine large enough to receive the multitudes that thronged to Him. On the green hill slopes of Galilee, in the thoroughfares of travel, by the seashore, in the synagogues, and in every other place where the sick could be brought to Him, was to be found His hospital. In every city, every town, every village, through which He passed, He laid His hands upon the afflicted ones and healed them. Wherever there were hearts ready to receive His message, He comforted them with the assurance of their heavenly Father's love. All day He ministered to those who came to Him; in the evening He gave attention to such as through the day must toil to earn a pittance for the support of their families. *Ministry of Healing pg. 17.3*

Jesus could not express in words to the understanding of man the love of the Father; he could only say, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But he did express the love of God in his actions. Never can we equal the goodness and the love of Jesus, but he calls upon every man and woman, youth and child, to behold him, and by beholding his perfection of character, to become changed into his image. Call every talent into exercise to copy the Pattern. *Signs of the Times, November 28, 1892, par. 7*

Medical missionary work was the right arm of the gospel that opened the hearts of those Christ ministered to. It is no different today.

The life of Christ and his ministry to the afflicted are inseparably connected. From the light that has been given me, I know that an intimate relationship should ever exist between the medical missionary work and the gospel ministry. They are bound together in sacred union as one work, and are never to be divorced. *Review and Herald, June 9, 1904 - The Great Medical Missionary*

What do we find from this glimpse into these potent chapters of Matthew? The ratio of Christ's healing to teaching is staggering. From the beginning of chapter 4 to the end of chapter 9, the ratio of healing to teaching is 3:1. In other words, 75% of the events recorded are of Christ healing people.

During His ministry, Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. His miracles testified to the truth of His words, that He came not to destroy, but to save. Wherever He went, the tidings of His mercy preceded Him. Where He had passed, the objects of His compassion were rejoicing in health and making trial of their new-found powers. Crowds were collecting around them to hear from their lips the works that the Lord had wrought. His voice was the first sound that many had ever heard, His name the first word they had ever spoken, His face the first they had ever looked upon. Why should they not love Jesus and sound His praise? As He passed through the towns and cities He was like a vital current, diffusing life and joy. *Ministry of Healing pg. 19.4*

The Saviour of the world devoted more time and labor to healing the afflicted of their maladies than to preaching. His last injunction to His apostles, His representatives upon the earth, was to lay hands on the sick that they might recover. When the Master shall come, He will commend those who have visited the sick and relieved the necessities of the afflicted. *Testimonies for the Church Vol 4, pg. 225.2*

Christ's life was centered around healing the people of every city and village He was in. But it wasn't just healing that Christ performed. The healing was for a purpose—to break down prejudice and cause the hearer to be ready to receive the message of hope and salvation He offered. The point is, Jesus wanted to help them as much as He possibly could! If all they would let Him do was heal their leprosy; he was glad to do that. But He wanted to heal them

from the disease of sin, to heal their souls if they would let Him.

The Saviour made each work of healing an occasion for implanting divine principles in the mind and soul. This was the purpose of His work. He imparted earthly blessings, that He might incline the hearts of men to receive the gospel of His grace. *The Ministry of Healing*, pg. 20.2

Health ministries has a purpose. To introduce broken humanity to a God who can not only relieve their physical suffering but also heal them spiritually. Health Ministries is the right arm of the gospel, and opens the doors of our communities, leading the way for the gospel to be shared.

Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by *trying* to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance. *Christ Object Lessons* pg. 384.2

Work with a heart filled with an earnest longing for souls. Do medical missionary work. Thus you will gain access to the hearts of the people. The way will be prepared for more decided proclamation of the truth. You will find that relieving their physical suffering gives you opportunity to minister to their spiritual needs.

The Lord will give you success in this work; for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation when it is interwoven with the practical life, when it is lived and practiced. The union of Christlike work for the body and Christlike work for the soul is the true interpretation of the gospel. *The Need of Medical Missionaries, Review and Harold, March 4, 1902.*

The truth is, “medical missionary work and the gospel ministry.... are never to be divorced.” (RH June 9, 1904 - The Great Medical Missionary). This is the key to reaching our communities, turning around dying churches, planting new churches, and spreading the messages of the three angels across the state of Michigan. This is how we hasten the second coming of Jesus Christ.

**In fact, this point is so important, that the servant of the Lord says that**

**when they are separated, it is the “worst evil.”**

Near the end of a talk given on May 18, 1904, in the middle of the Kellogg crisis, Ellen White points out what is the worst evil a church can have. The entire talk is powerful, but this paragraph is especially important for what we are considering.

My brethren, the Lord calls for unity, for oneness. We are to be one in the faith. **I want to tell you that when the gospel ministers and the medical missionary workers are not united, there is placed on our churches the worst evil that can be placed there.** Our medical missionaries ought to be interested in the work of our conferences, and our conference workers ought to be as much interested in the work of our medical missionaries. *Talk: The Foundation of Our Faith - Berrien Springs, Michigan - May 18, 1904*

This is an alarming comment. Has Satan stealthfully placed the “greatest evil” upon our churches?

This point is re-iterated again and again throughout the Spirit of Prophecy. The following paragraphs are just a small sampling of the dozens of quotes on this:

Medical missionary work is in no case to be divorced from the gospel ministry. The Lord has specified that the two shall be as closely connected as the arm is with the body. Without this union neither part of the work is complete. The medical missionary work is the gospel in illustration. *Testimonies Vol 6, pg. 240.3*

The medical missionary work is not to be carried forward as something apart from the work of the gospel ministry. The Lord’s people are to be one. There is to be no separation in His work. Time and means are being absorbed in a work which is carried forward too earnestly in one direction. The Lord has not appointed this. He sent out His twelve apostles and afterward the Seventy to preach the word to the people, and He gave them power to heal the sick and to cast out devils in His name. The two lines of work must not be separated. Satan will invent every possible schem to separate those whom God is seeking to make one. We must not be misled by his devices. The medical missionary work is to be connected with the third angel’s message as the hand is connected with

the body; and the education of students in medical missionary lines is not complete unless they are trained to work in connection with the church and the ministry. *Counsels on Health* pg. 557.1

The life of Christ and His ministry to the afflicted are inseparably connected. From the light that has been given me, I know that an intimate relationship should ever exist between the medical missionary work and the gospel ministry. They are bound together in sacred union as one work, and are never to be divorced. The principles of heaven are to be adopted and practiced by those who claim to walk in the Saviour's footsteps. By His example He has shown us that medical missionary work is not to take the place of the preaching of the gospel, but is to be bound up with it. Christ gave a perfect representation of true godliness by combining the work of a physician and a minister, ministering to the needs of both body and soul, healing physical disease, and then speaking words that brought peace to the troubled heart.... *Counsels on Health* pg. 528.1

This counsel was written over 100 years ago. Some may wonder if times were different back then. Does this still apply today? In a letter written by Ellen White during Kellogg's attempt to separate the gospel from the medical work, she wrote the following:

The Holy Spirit never has, and never will in the future, divorce the medical missionary work from the gospel ministry. They can not be divorced. Bound up with Jesus Christ, the ministry of the word and the healing of the sick are one. *Testimonies for the Church Containing Messages of Warning and Instruction to Seventh-day Adventists - Chapter 14 - Come out and be Separate* pg 64.1

Kellogg was doing "all in his power to create a division between the medical work and the ministry of the gospel." (*Ibid* 61.1) This was not a new warning. In 1899, White wrote another letter to Kellogg, warning him to never establish a health institution separate from the church. Over the course of the letter, she clearly articulated that they were never to separate the entities. Then she makes this startling statement.

Never, never should a sanitarium be established to become an interest independent of the church. Genuine medical missionary work is in no case to become divorced from the gospel ministry. The cross is the center

of all religious institutions. These institutions are to be under the control of the Spirit of God, and no one man is to be the sole head in these institutions. The divine mind has men for every place. *Letter 204, 1899 - J.H. Kellogg par. 16.*

This counsel makes a lot of sense. If the worst evil comes from separating health and ministry, then God would strongly warn his people that these should never be established apart from each other.

The work of health reform connected with the present truth for this time, is a power for good. It is the right hand of the gospel, and often opens fields for the entrance of the gospel. But let it ever be remembered that the work must move solidly and in complete harmony with God's plan of organization. Churches are to be organized, and in no case are these churches to divorce themselves from the medical missionary work. Neither is the medical missionary work to be divorced from the gospel ministry. When this is done, both are one-sided. Neither is a complete whole. *Selected Messages, Vol 1 pg. 112.2*

Could this be why, across Michigan, so many churches are struggling? We have a large proportion of our churches that are 30 members or less. Many are financially struggling, hampered in their evangelistic work, and unable to support a school.

Could it be that some of our churches are “one-sided” and are not “a complete whole”? Could it be that we have allowed Satan to bring in the “worst evil” by unintentionally separating health evangelism from the gospel ministry? If we are going to win our state for Christ, spread the 3 Angels messages across our conference, and hasten the second coming of Jesus—then this needs to change!

I wish to say that I want to take hold of the medical missionary work to the utmost of my ability. We have done the best we could in this line of work in Australia. I thank the Lord that His blessing has accompanied our work. Christ's ministers must stand in an altogether different position. They must be evangelists, they must be medical missionaries. They must take hold of the work intelligently. But it is of no use for them to think that they can do this while they drop the work which God has said should be connected with the gospel. If they drop out the medical missionary work, they need not think that they can carry forward their

work successfully, for they have only half the necessary facilities.  
*Manuscript Release Vol 6 pg. 313.2*

At the 1901 General Conference session in Battle Creek, Michigan, a motion came to the floor regarding adding Medical Professionals to the GC Executive Committee. Several stood to argue for and against. This was a critical point in Adventist History. Our world church was about to move from a small controlling group to a larger representative committee. It was at this vital point that the prophet stood to speak. Over the next few minutes, she presented a powerful case for health evangelism. Then she makes this statement:

“The barren fields in America have been presented to me. In every city in Michigan there should be a monument erected for God. You have been long in the truth. Had you carried the work forward in the lines in which God intended you to, had you done medical missionary work, trying to heal soul and body, you would have seen hundreds and thousands coming into the truth. *April 12, 1901 - Remarks by Mrs. E. G. White*

The first question is, What are these monuments? These monuments are churches that proclaim the 3 Angels Messages—7th Day Adventist Churches (SpM 246.1).

These were words spoken over 115 years ago. Churches in every city of Michigan. How have we done?

There are 276 cities in Michigan ([Wikipedia])([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_municipalities\\_in\\_Michigan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_municipalities_in_Michigan)) and 186 churches. At quick glance, this doesn't look good. However, this isn't an accurate number. Thirty six of these churches are in the same city as other SDA churches. As a conference, we have only set-up memorials for God in 150 cities in Michigan That's only 54%!

Many of these churches are struggling. How can we reverse this terrible trend. Thankfully, the Lord doesn't leave us in the dark. Referring to the above quote, notice the solution, “Had you done medical missionary work, trying to heal soul and body, you would have seen hundreds and thousands coming into the truth.”

This theme is repeated again and again. Notice the following quotes about why Medical Missionary work is critical to the raising up of churches in our

cities.

There are souls in many places who have not yet heard the message. Henceforth medical missionary work is to be carried forward with an earnestness with which it has never yet been carried. This work is the door through which the truth is to find entrance to the large cities, and sanitariums are to be established in many places. *Testimonies Vol 9 pg 167.2*

The medical missionary work is a door through which the truth is to find entrance to many homes in the cities. In every city will be found those who will appreciate the truths of the third angel's message. The judgments of God are impending. Why do we not awaken to the peril threatening the men and women living in the great cities of America? Our people do not realize as keenly as they should the responsibility resting upon them to proclaim the truth to the millions dwelling in these unwarned cities. *Counsels on Health pg. 556.1*

At Lansing, we want to fulfill this prophecy from God's last day prophet. We want to establish a memorial to God where thousands of people will experience healing for soul and body.

Genuine medical missionary work is bound up inseparably with the keeping of God's commandments, of which the Sabbath is especially mentioned, since it is the great memorial of God's creative work. Its observance is bound up with the work of restoring the moral image of God in man. This is the ministry which God's people are to carry forward at this time. This ministry, rightly performed, will bring rich blessings to the church.—*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 6, pg. 266*

A few pages earlier, in the same volume of the Testimonies, an inspiring vision is cast. A view of what God wants to do. Something that our congregation could be the means of re-starting across this great state. Notice the call.

In every city where we have a church there is need of a place where treatment can be given. Among the homes of our church members there are few that afford room and facilities for the proper care of the sick. A place should be provided where treatment may be given for common ailments. The building might be inelegant and even rude, but it should

be furnished with facilities for giving simple treatments. These, skillfully employed, would prove a blessing not only to our people, but to their neighbors, and might be the means of calling the attention of many to health principles. *Testimonies vol 6, pg. 112-113 - Object Lessons On Health Reform*

Health institutions, rightly conducted, give character to our work as genuine. In every city where health reform is presented to the people there should be a limited ministry of the benefits of practical health reform, and a place provided where the sick may be treated for common ailments. The building may not be all that could be desired, but it may be fitted up to give treatment in simple lines. This simple work will prove a blessing. A good physician, who understands the simple means we used in our first practice of health reform, has done wonders even in our camp meetings. This work has always proved a blessing. If carried on under the labors of physicians and nurses, such work has given a practical sermon on health reform. *Manuscript Release #20, pg. 354.1*

### **Does this include the entire church? Or just health professionals?**

We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work. The world is a Lazar house filled with victims of both physical and spiritual disease. Everywhere people are perishing for lack of a knowledge of the truths that have been committed to us. The members of the church are in need of an awakening, that they may realize their responsibility to impart these truths. Those who have been enlightened by the truth are to be light bearers to the world. To hide our light at this time is to make a terrible mistake. The message to God's people today is: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." *Testimonies Vol 7, pg. 62.1*

### **The Vision**

Imagine church based outreach teams that are reaching thousands of people across the Greater Lansing area. Imagine thousands coming to cooking classes, health seminars, addiction recovery seminars, parenting seminars, finance seminars, and so much more. Imagine members, fanning out across to people's homes, teaching them how to cook healthfully, lifting up the love of Jesus to them and pointing them to a savior that loves them and has a message for this time. Imagine hundreds or even thousands coming into the

truth of the 3 Angels Messages in the Lansing and surrounding region. This would dramatically change how our church operates. Instead of only one church, we would need to plant many more.

This is the call of the Lord through His prophet. A ministry that turns the city of Lansing upside down for Jesus Christ.

Acts 17:6 And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also,

### **Will begin small:**

The way of the world is to begin with pomp and boasting. God’s way is to make the day of small things the beginning of the glorious triumph of truth and righteousness. Sometimes He trains His workers by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It is His purpose that they shall learn to master difficulties.

Often men are tempted to falter before the perplexities and obstacles that confront them. But if they will hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end, God will make the way clear. Success will come to them as they struggle against difficulties. Before the intrepid spirit and unwavering faith of a Zerubbabel, great mountains of difficulty will become a plain; and he whose hands have laid the foundation, even “his hands shall also finish it.” “He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.” [Zechariah 4:9, 7](1965.46818) . *Prophets and Kings pg. 595*

The Lord will give you success in this work; for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation when it is interwoven with the practical life, when it is lived and practiced. The union of Christlike work for the body and Christlike work for the soul is the true interpretation of the gospel. *Review and Herald March 4, 1902, par. 13*