

Shawn Brummund: Good morning, and welcome to another edition of the "Sabbath School Study Hour." We are just so glad that you have decided to join us here, as we have come together on this beautiful Sabbath morning here in Roseville, Sacramento, California. It has been sunny and rain-free for the last several months. We've been struggling, as many of you know across the nation, we have been struggling with some of the most serious, far-reaching fires that we've ever had before, and now we have some rain. So we're very thankful for a little bit of rain, and we trust that that will be the start of some much-needed rain here in this part of the country.

We're just so glad again that you have joined us, both our online members that had continued to join us from Sabbath to Sabbath across the nation, of course, our local church members that are joining us, we know that we all miss each other. I certainly miss teaching the Sabbath School Study Hour with my local church family, but I am blessed and thankful to be able to be here in the local studio of the Amazing Facts headquarters and still be able to worship and study with you even if it's on a virtual basis. So especially good morning to all our local church members, friends here locally that attend our church, and, of course, we're always thankful for all the different friends that join us from around the world, both through the Internet, as well as through the various satellite television networks.

We are continuing to study a very important subject on Christian education. In light of the Bible today is "The Church and Christian Education." And so this is no small subject. It's a very important one for us to consider as a church and what are the counsels that God has for us.

Before we get into our study, we open it with prayer. I want to invite all of you to take advantage of a free book offer that we have here this morning. It's written by Pastor Joe Crews, "Why God Said Remember." Now, friends, this is a great read. I remember reading it in years past. It helped answer some very important questions that many thinking-Christians are asking in regards to the fourth commandment and the Sabbath. And so if you would like a copy of this and you live in the United States, just go ahead and dial 1-866-788-3966. Again, that's 1-866-788-3966. I believe we'll have it on the screen. And when you call that number, just ask for Free Offer Number 185.

Perhaps you'd rather have a digital copy of this--you can text to the number 40544, and in the actual message box, you'll want to put "SH129." Now, when you do that, there'll be an automatic response. We'll give you a free digital download of this particular free offer, so please take advantage of that as you continue to study and grow in the knowledge of that important topic.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, this morning, we are thankful for the opportunity to be able to study. God, I am just so grateful that You have given us Your Bible. We thank You for Your love and Your personal offer for us to be able to have a personal, saving relationship with You through Your Son Jesus Christ. God, this morning, we want to pray that You will bless us, that You will keep us, that, Father in heaven, the time that we spend will be well invested and that, God, Your Holy Spirit will do His special work, His vital work in leading and guiding us and teaching us all truth and bringing to remembrance all things that which You have taught us. And so, Father, we claim Your promise. We claim Your offer. We ask for it now. In Jesus's name we pray these things, amen.

Well, as many of you know, 2,000 years ago, Jesus died on a cross for the sin and the guilt of all of humanity. And as many of you also know, Jesus rose to glory some-three days later. And shortly after He rose to glory, He appeared to His disciples off and on at different times in the city of Jerusalem, and then, as the Gospel records tell us, Jesus also then met His disciples back in His home country of northern Israel in the land of Galilee at a very specific mountain that He had pointed them to as their meeting place, right beside the Sea of Galilee. And the Bible tells us in the last verses of Matthew

chapter 28, that, when the disciples saw them, they worshiped Him, even though some were still struggling with doubt.

And then it tells us that Jesus came to them and spoke, saying, "All authority has been given to Me, both in heaven and on earth, and go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things in which I've commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." And so, many of us are familiar with that. If you haven't memorized it as a Christian, as a believer, friends, I want to encourage you to be able to memorize that. Write it upon your heart.

Friends, the elements of that is the Great Commission that God has given to the church, starting with those first apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ. You see, friends, the context of that is that Jesus was now wrapping up His earthly ministry, just before He ascended to His Father in heaven. For the last three and a half years, Jesus, in a very powerful way, was the most masterful, most powerful teacher that Israel had ever known. In fact, there's a statement that is written by one of my favorite authors by far, by the name of Ellen White, and she makes this very clear, succinct comment when she says that "Christ was the greatest educator that the world ever knew."

Now, friends, I hope that you could say amen to that because I know that it is true, and Jesus gives us more than enough evidence to be able to demonstrate that that is true. And, of course, being an educator is what we're looking at in this particular quarterly. We're looking at Christian education, and so we want to look at it in the light of the greatest educator that ever lived on this planet, and again, that is Jesus Christ Himself.

Now, even as Jesus is the--was the greatest educator that the world had ever knew while He was here in this earthly life, of course, Jesus also told us, just hours before He was crucified, that, indeed, He would still be with us and still be our most important educator. How would that be? Well, He told us in that last speech that He shared with His disciples that, indeed, He would send another Comforter, another Helper that would be with us in the same capacity that Jesus was physically with His first disciples and apostles on this planet in Israel. In John Chapter 14, in verse 26, Jesus put it like this: He said, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."

And so, friends, we find here that Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit would be sent by Jesus. Jesus very clearly, in that chapter, said in different ways that, "If you have the Holy Spirit, you have Me. I will not leave you orphans," Jesus says. "I will come to you." And, again, in the verses before that statement, as well as the verses after that statement, Jesus clarified that He would do that through the person of the Holy Spirit. And so, friends, we are blessed, and we are privileged to be able to remember that.

I hope that you do remember that as we continue on in our Christian experience. And so coming back to Jesus wrapping up His earthly ministry, it is true that He had 12 key students that He called "apostles," but the Bible record also tells us that there were approximately 120 disciples in total that were bona fide followers and students of Jesus Christ. And so Jesus wraps up His ministry. He has 12 apostolic leaders, but He has a group of about 120 followers and students that had been studying with Him either for the full three and a half years or a segment of that time in which He had been teaching, preaching, and leading. And so now that His work on earth is done, He commissions the newborn church to carry out that vital work in which we found in the Great Commission of Matthew chapter 28, "Teach them."

Who's the "them," friends? "Teach them." Well, these are the new disciples. These are the new believers that Jesus has called us to make in all the nations. Jesus says, "Teach them to observe all things in which I have commanded you." And so Jesus, in the Great Gospel Commission, tells us that the church

is to be a place of education, Christian education. And, indeed, this is part of the discipleship program, the discipleship plan that Jesus played out during His life, and He modeled for us as Christians and as a church, and so it's important for us to be able to understand that.

And so the question is asked, "How has the church fulfilled this commission?" Well, we preach on a regular basis, so we have lots of public preaching that is taking place in thousands and tens of thousands of places of worship around the world, even today. And, friends, we've been doing that for decades. The Christian church, in general, has been doing that for centuries. And so, indeed, the church has fulfilled this commission and command by Jesus through public preaching, but not only that but that we've also--are conducting thousands and tens of thousands of Sabbath school classes, even right now, today, across this great world. We offer prayer meetings, small group Bible studies, one-on-one Bible studies.

Friends, there are millions of printed pages and published books and articles and magazines in which is continuing to educate people and helping them to observe all things in which Jesus has brought to the church. We also have radio. We continue to also educate through television, through the Internet, through satellite, and, of course, we also educate through our church schools, our church academies, our colleges, our universities. Friends, all of this is some of the most vital activities that we have and that God has led us to be able to participate in in order to fulfill that Great Commission that God has given to us. And that's what we're looking at this week, the church and Christian education. What is the church's role in that education? And so that's what we're opening up here today.

Well, what is the key or most important textbook in Christian education? When you think of Christian education, whether it's in our academies, colleges, universities, in our local church building and congregation, what is the most important and key textbook that we have? Well, I hope you also all answered with the same single answer, and that is the Holy Bible. Again, coming back to my favorite author by the name of Ellen White, she says, "As an educator, the Holy Scriptures are without rival." I'll read that one more time: "As an educator, the Holy Scriptures are without rival." In other words, there's nothing that comes close to being the most effective, most important fundamental and primary educator than that of the Holy Scriptures, of the Holy Bible.

Now, friends, this may seem like a very elementary question and answer for me to bring to you as Christians. Many of you are saying, "Well, that's kind of a no-brainer, Pastor." And yet, I think it is worth asking because, friends, I've studied in Christian colleges, and, friends, I have to admit, I have to--it's sad to say that, I would say that there was more than one of my teachers, not all by far, but there was more than one of my teachers that I believe lost sight of that fundamental truth, and so, friends, I think it's important for us to come back to it and ask that question. For some of us, it may be very obvious. For some of us, it may be God challenging us and inviting us back to the most important textbook that we have.

This is book number one when it comes to true Christian education. Now, friends, I wish I could say that it was only in our colleges, but, friends, I've also sat in some of our churches in the--over the years, and I've listened to some of our pastors, and again, I'm not saying that this represents all pastors--not by any means. But I've listened to more than one pastor on a Sabbath morning behind the pulpit, and I hear everything but the Bible. And, friends, that tells me that, again, that somehow along the way, somehow along those years in which that minister or pastor was preaching and working for the Lord, they have lost sight of that primary answer and the important question that I asked, "What is the most important and primary textbook for Christian education?" And so, again, it may be very elementary for some of us, but for some of us, I think that it is something that we need to readdress in regards to our ministry, whether we're a school teacher, whether we're a Sabbath school teacher, whether we're a college or university professor, whether we're a pastor.

The Bible says it best concerning itself, and we find that in 2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 16. Many of us, again, are familiar with it, but it's something that I think is worth revisiting, and for some of us reading for the first time. And so if you've never read 2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 16, please turn in your Bibles with me as we look at that in--vital description that the Bible says concerning itself and its purpose as an educator.

And for those of you who studied with us last week with Pastor Rodor, we looked at that text in another context, and certainly it is worth revisiting in this particular subject as well. And so, again, 2 Timothy 3:16, it says, "All Scripture is given of inspiration of God, and it is profitable--" profitable for what? In other words, there is great benefit to it.

What is the profit that comes from the inspiration of the inspired Scriptures that God has given to us in the Holy Bible? Well, it is for doctrine.

Well, then we ask the question, what is doctrine? You know, before I was a Christian, I started to study the Bible, I'd never heard of the word "doctrine." We don't use that on the streets, but yet, friends, it is a vital word that we need understand. What is doctrine? Well, doctrine is religious teachings of truth, and so the Holy Scriptures of God, given by God, is profitable for teaching true religious principles and truths. It is also given to us to benefit us in giving us reproof at times.

Sometimes we need to be able to smart-up in different areas of our life in which we are involving ourselves or not involving ourselves in things that we should be or shouldn't be doing. It's also given to for our correction. Every time I used to read that, I used to think, well, that is also kind of like "reproof." Its correcting where I'm going wrong.

But, friends, I also believe that this is also there to correct us in regards to our opinions, our world views, our theologies, our theories. In other words, when we come to the Holy Bible, it is profitable to correct different theologies that we assumed were the truth, perhaps even we were taught in our religious institutions was the truth. Perhaps our parents believed them, and we understood them to be the truth, but then God comes through His Word, and He corrects us in concern to that. This is part of Christian education as well. And so, again, "The Bible is given for our profit, both in religious teachings of truth for reproof, for correction, and then also for instruction."

Friends, that sounds a whole lot like a classroom, doesn't it? Okay, I come to the classroom when I went to school, in high school, college, for instruction from my teacher, and, in this case, it's instruction in righteousness. In other words, it's there to be able to show us what is that narrow way, what is that pathway that Jesus said He came to give us that we might have abundant life, that we might increase the quality of our life and our experience. And so it is there for giving us instruction in righteousness, "That the man," and of course, also the woman," of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

In other words, the Bible is the number one source for us to be complete in our education and as people. That's very important for us to understand, friends. It makes us complete--what? For what is the end of that completeness, what is the end of that education, and it ends with that key word, which is--or two words we could say, for every "good work." And so God tells us what good works are.

And then, friends, work means action, doesn't it? And so it tells us then that, once we receive that and as we continue to receive that instruction that comes from the Holy Bible, then, friends, it is at that point then we go out, and we apply those things in which we have received. And this is the good works that God has given to us. How we work in life for the benefit of ourselves, for our families, for mankind, it's all found first and foremost here. Now, yes, of course, we still have science and biology and physics

class and English class, history, all of these wonderful and important subjects that we find in our education, all based primarily and reflecting though upon the foundation, which is the Holy Bible of God.

Well, not only that, but the Bible also expands your mind, and therefore, it makes you more intellectually capable towards all areas of your life. And when I say, "all areas," I mean all areas of life, whether you're banking or whether you're shopping, you're making a decision of what car to buy or whether you're making a decision on who to marry, whatever it is, friends, the more that you apply your mind to the Bible, the more it expands your minds and makes you more intellectually capable to be able to apply yourselves in a more successful way in all areas of life. And so, friends, the Bible is pointing us to these things for a very practical benefit, not only for us, of course, but as the principle of heaven is that we are there to be a blessing to all those around us at the same time.

I want to share with you a quote again--and, by the way, all the quotes, including this one, is coming from one of my favorite books that I'm just reading through now. It's called "Messages to Young People," and this particular quote says this: "The mind will enlarge if it is employed," meaning if it is worked, "in tracing out the relation of the subjects of the Bible, comparing Scripture with Scripture, spiritual things with spiritual," and so, friends, enlarging your mind--today, we would probably use the word more, "expand." It expands your mind. It expands your intellect when you put subject upon subject, "Here a little, there a little," as a prophet Isaiah said, "Line upon line, precept upon precept."

Friends, there's not just one chapter or Bible--a book in the Bible that tells you all the things that God wants you to know about heaven. But, friends, we need to be able to look through the whole Bible because God has that thread all the way through the Bible. And so Isaiah is one of the more prolific writers on the heaven and the experience that God has for us after this earthly life. Certainly Revelation gives us a whole lot on it as well, but friends, it is found in many different books and chapters throughout the Bible, and when we put those lines upon line, precept upon precept, comparing Scripture with Scripture, friends, this will outdo any--and I've got to look on my notes here because I'm going to mispronounce it-- "Suduko." Suduko? Is that how you pronounce it? Okay, I got my wife here in the studio, and she's there to help me with my pronunciation. But Sudoku has become one of the most popular kind of mind-exercise games that we can practice.

I want to give you a challenge, I want to suggest something to you. I would like to suggest that you take your Sudoku and you put it in the drawer and you forget all about your Sudoku, and the hours that you spent in your Sudoku, exercising your mind--and I know seniors are more gravitating to that because it helps--you know, it's been proven to be able to help delay any on-come of Alzheimer's and dementia and so on, and I'm sure that evidence is there.

But just like many things in life, there are different things that we can do to be able to experience that benefit, but some are more effective than others. Friends, inspiration tells me that the best way to exercise and expand your mind is to spend those same hours in here. And, friends, it is an adventure and is way more fulfilling, and it is way more mind-expanding and also mind-exercising and challenging than any Sudoku or any other mind game that you can find on the Internet or in the Game Store.

Friends, you know, when I'm reading through Isaiah more than once because I've read through Revelation so many times in the past, I'll be writing through Isaiah-- I'll be reading through Isaiah, and I remember, you know, one example, I was reading through Isaiah. It was around 22 or something. I forget what chapter it is now at this time by my memory, but there's a chapter in Isaiah that talks about the same thing that the last chapters of Revelation talk about in regards, in this case, Revelation 20, in regards to the millennium and the devil being bound in chains and cast into the bottomless pit, and that all the lost will be in that same bottomless pit as they're slain by the glory of the Lord when Jesus returns.

Well, Isaiah says the same thing. He says that all the lost will become prisoners, bound in a pit like prisoners. And when I read that, friends, my mind immediately started to exercise itself and brought back to mind Revelation 20, which I've studied so many times in the past. And, friends, this is just an example of dozens and perhaps hundreds of times over the years in which God has helped my mind to connect Scripture upon Scripture, line upon line, as the Bible becomes more and more familiar to me as I continue to connect those dots. And, friends, connecting those dots will do way more for you than any Sudoku will bring to your benefit.

So that's just my little suggestion and challenge. Also, I want to challenge you on something else, you know, and that's in concern to Bible class. In our academies, in particular, of course, when you get to the college level, there are different required Christian education, Bible education classes that are needed to be able to graduate from any degree, and, of course, that should be the way it is. When you're signing up for a Christian college education, you should expect Christian instruction and education. And Christianity is not based on biology and based on physics first. It's based on the Holy Scriptures first. And, again, friends, I believe that, even though that may sound elementary to many of us, to many of us, or to some of us, I should say--I have to be careful with my words--but to some of us in those different positions in our institutions have lost sight of that.

If we have never seen the Bible class in our academies, in our high schools, in our elementary schools, in our church schools, as the most important class in all the curriculum that we are offering, friends, I would like to suggest that we are missing the mark. When the HR department, when the principals of our schools are hiring their Bible teacher, this should be handled more thoroughly and more carefully than hiring any other teacher in your school.

Now, friends, I know, by experience and observation, that that may sound revolutionary, and yet it shouldn't sound revolutionary. It should sound standard. We should all be saying, "Amen, that's the way it is, and that's the way it always will be." But, friends, I fear that, too often, that we view and treat Bible class as a required add-on, as an extracurricular that we kind of just have to meet so that we can call it a Christian school, and all other subjects and all the other teachers are viewed as more important than the Bible teacher. I suggest that this is a mistake. I suggest that this is a mistake bigger than we may ever know.

God has given us the most important textbook, and so, when a teacher is telling in a school, is telling the students that are signing up for school for that year, what are all the required textbooks because they are going to have to buy and require, the first one on the list should be the Holy Bible. Friends, this should be our number one textbook, not just in word, but in principle, in thought, in faith, in belief. And so, friends, again, I think that this can challenge us.

These words that I'm bringing to you may be challenging some of you, friends, but I want to encourage you to come back to understand some of these thoughts that I'm bringing back to you or perhaps bringing to you for the very first time. When it comes to college and university education, now, there are some of us that are skeptical of higher education in general. And some of us have mistakenly come to understand that getting an education in college or university is somehow never a plan for the Christian, never a plan for a pastor, never a plan for a teacher, or whatever it is, but I would like to share with you that the inspiration of God tells us something very, very different.

Friends, we need to remember that, if we have fallen into that trap or are falling into that thought pattern, that one of the key founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church movement is that of Ellen White, and, friends, when you study the life and history of Ellen White, you will find that she was very intricately involved in both the founding and the building and the funding of many of our first colleges. She's also on record of sponsoring more than one student with her own personal money. Her and James

White had forked out many, many dollars to be able to help fund the higher college and university education of some of our first Seventh-day Adventist students. And so, very clearly, God was leading in her life.

Very clearly, God was leading her to understand that for the Christian, for the Seventh-day Adventist, higher education is something of great value for many of us, depending on what profession that we are entering into. And so I think it's important for us to be able to understand that. I want to read with you a couple of quotes, and these are just so instructive and so beneficial. I normally don't share quite as much as I am today, but I just feel so compelled to be able to do that here today. And, again, this is coming from what is becoming one of my favorite books, "Messages to Young People." Now, I know I'm a little bit past that age, and so I've kind of missed the boat on that, but I can be of a benefit to those who are truly still young, if I could say that. My wife is probably smirking at me and giving me the dirty look now. She doesn't like it when I say that, "Hey, we're growing old." But hey, the fact of the matter is time continues on, and, yes, I do look younger than I am, but I don't feel as young as I used to.

Page 170, it says, "Jesus did not despise education." I'm going to read that one more time: "Jesus did not despise education. The highest culture of the mind, if sanctified through the love and fear of God, receives his fullest approval." And then, later on, she says, "God will accept the youth with their talent and their wealth of affection if they will consecrate themselves to him. They may reach to the highest point of intellectual greatness. God has called us to be able to do so. They may reach the highest point of intellectual greatness, and if balanced by religious principle, they can carry forward the work which Christ came from heaven to accomplish and, thus doing, be coworkers with the Master."

And so, friends, when we are truly consecrated and devoted in following Christ, she is saying, listen, you can attain some of the highest levels of education and intellectual cultivation possible. And, in fact, we're going to read a quote shortly here that tells us that makes us more capable and more valuable in the work and field of Christ. And so that is just so important for us to be able to understand.

Again, she says, "The students of our college have valuable privileges, not only to obtain the knowledge of the sciences, but also of learning how to cultivate and practice virtues, which will make--give them symmetrical characters." And, you know, friends, in a time and age in which we live here in the United States and many of the first world countries around the world, many of the developing countries, even, around the world today, as well, higher education has become the norm. It's not the exception anymore.

You know, if you go back 50, 80 years, it was the exception--not today. Today it is the norm, and so, friends, we need to be able to communicate with these people in an intellectual, educated way if we're going to be as effective as possible in reaching them. And, yes, I know, and Ellen White points that out in the same chapter earlier on that Jesus chose uneducated fishermen and so on. Not all of them were uneducated. Matthew, the tax collector, certainly knew how to read and write and was very adept with numbers and accounting. A certain Judas Iscariot, who had pushed himself into the circle, was very highly capable and educated.

But the best example that we really have in all the Scriptures of the apostles is the apostle, as he says, was called out of due season, which is the apostle Paul. And so the Apostle Paul, for whatever reason, wasn't yet ready to be able to accept Christ and enter into that original 12, but he was called later on as one of the apostles of Jesus Christ, and friends, he was by far the most educated of them all. He was educated in the city of Jerusalem under the most renowned rabbis of his time, and so his parents had probably sacrificed great amounts of resources to send him from their hometown of Tarsus, down to the Holy City of Jerusalem for him to be able to receive this greatest of education. And because of that, God made him the ambassador to the Gentiles, to the Greeks, who are already very well cultured in

higher education. And so, when Paul was called by God to stand before the Athenians in the Areopagus, you know, he was talking to some of the greatest minds and most-educated minds of his time, and he was able to do so because he had an education that was able to speak to them in the most effective way possible.

Now, that's not to discourage anybody that doesn't have a college education to say, "Well, then, the Lord can't use me." No, Jesus had demonstrated that we can self-educate ourselves through the Bible and through the spirit of prophecy, and through all these other resources. Ellen White, of course, is the ultimate example and model for us in that regard. Because of some very serious health issues, she was forced to drop out of school in her early grade years of grade school. And yet, friends, when I first became a Seventh-day Adventist and I picked up one of her best reads, which is "The Great Controversy," and I read that from cover to cover the first month after I was baptized, and you know, when I read through that book, there's one thing that I recognized very quickly is that I need a dictionary right next to it, and that's because there was all kinds of words in there that I've never seen before, and where did she learn all these? She didn't learn it in grade four, I can tell you that, before she was forced to drop out of school. No, she had self-educated herself.

Now, many of those words aren't found in the Bible, either, why? Because even though the Bible was her primary, fundamental, foundational textbook, her library was full of all kinds of different contemporary authors, and so she was a very self-educated historian and theologian in particular. You know, she had poured thousands of hours and her own self-discipline and motivation, becoming an expert in history and an expert in theology. So she was very self-educated, and so, yes, our student--our colleges are there to be able to provide structure, to provide encouragement, you know, just like we grow in the faith and we come together from week to week and throughout the midweek and so on as Christians and as church members.

So students find encouragement and strength when they're together at times, and so they find themselves learning together and encouraging each other and finding these truths and the discipline that comes with accountability of meeting deadlines and such. And so all of this can fall under the umbrella of God's blessing and intention for us to be well educated.

I'm going to go ahead, just, and look at a couple more quotes on one more page, page 173. It says, "God requires the training of the mental faculties." It doesn't say, "God suggests the training of the mental faculties." It says, "God requires the training of the mental faculties." I hope you picked that up, friends. "He designs that His servants shall possess more intelligence and clear discernment than the worldling, and He is displeased with those who are too careless or too indolent to become efficient, well-informed workers."

And so there's two key words there: the first one is "God requires the training of mental faculties," and then there's also that second and third sentence where He says we must become "efficient, well-informed workers." "Well-informed" means "well-educated." "The Lord bids us love Him with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and all the mind," as He adds to that great commandment of Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 5. So He adds "all the mind" there as well. "This lays upon us the obligation of developing the intellect to its fullest capacity, that with all the mind we may know and love our Creator."

And so, friends, again, God is not presenting this as a suggestion. He is saying this is one of the things that He requires and expects from us. And so, if you are satisfied with where you are in regards to your education, even if you're a college graduate, a postgraduate graduate, and you finished all the formal education you will ever want or need, friends, your education still doesn't stop. You cannot acquire your



greatest intellectual capacity in the years in which you went to college and university, unless, of course, you're a professional student.

But once you're finished, friends, you want to still continue to develop that to its fullest capacity. "If placed under the control of the Holy Spirit," and, of course, that's "if." "If you're placed under the control of the Holy Spirit, the more thoroughly the intellect is cultivated, the more effectively it can be used in the service of God." And so it is revealing here, friends, that there is a direct correlation between our education, both the formal and self-education, that continues to help us reach higher and higher levels of intellectual capacity that will make us more and more effective and capable servants for Him in the work of the gospel.

"The uneducated man who is consecrated to God and who longs to bless others can be used by the Lord in His service. But those who, with the same spirit of consecration, have had the benefit of a thorough education, can do much more extensive work for Christ. They are the ones that stand on vantage ground." And so, friends, this is important for us to understand, and I hope that helped you if it is something that you have thought otherwise, why? Because, again, remember the--all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, why? For doctrine, for correction, or for reproof or correction, and instruction of righteousness. In this case, sometimes God corrects us, and so, friends, if there's correction that's needed as you're watching this program and study I pray that it will be something that will be helpful.

All right, some of you are asking, "Are we ever going to get to the quarterly?" And, yes, we are. And so we're going to spend the last few minutes looking at the quarterly here as well, but I just really felt compelled to lay that foundation in concern to the church's role in Christian education. And so, when we look at Sabbath, last time, we find some really good advice there to the church in telling us that we should place--the church should be a place to find open, studious, serious conversations, where no question is a dumb question.

Now, friends, I have to confess that I really like that advice, why? Because I always feel like I was the one with the dumb questions when I was going through school and--but God has brought me to a point where I don't care if it's a dumb question. I don't care if somebody thinks I am dumb or because I'm asking a dumb question. You know, often, people share something with me, and they'll use some big word that I've never heard or I've never really defined before, and I'll just stop them and ask, you know, "Listen, I just need a--can you just give me a quick definition of that word that you just used?" You know, we'd be able to ask questions. No dumb--no--the only question that's a dumb question is the question that wasn't asked. And so, friends, no matter how dumb it may sound to you, friends, if you don't know the answer, then you're in a worse spot than if you didn't ask the question or if you did ask the question.

I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage us, as both teachers in our Sabbath School class as well as participants, to faithfully keep the conversation focused on the Scriptures. Now, friends, this is a burden that God has put in my heart in the early years of my pastoring experience, and that is that I have sat in so many Sabbath schools in which I was not teaching, and, friends, as I sit in those Sabbath schools over the years, you know, this burden has been growing and growing. I've shared it with many members, different fellow pastors and leaders and Sabbath school teachers, and now I have the opportunity to share it with you.

Friends, we need to be able to make sure--now, our biggest commission as a Sabbath School teacher is to keep the class where their nose is in this. And, friends, I have to say--I hate to say it, but well over 50% of the time of any Sabbath school that I sat in, this, even if we start here, which quite often we don't, but even if we start to get our noses in here, we just depart from it so quickly and so easily, and we fall into this rut where we're just all sharing our opinions and "I thinks."

Now, it's not to say that I don't value your opinion, friends, but there's an opinion that is much greater than yours and mine, and that's the opinion that's found in here. And so, friends, I don't want to come to church and spend an hour--I don't want to get up early in the morning and have to run out the door so I can sit in a class and listen to everybody's opinion. I've come to listen to the opinion of Christ. I want to know what His opinion is, and so, friends, we have become experts at sharing our opinions, but, friends, we are not coming together to be able to share each other's opinions. We need to be able to understand what is the heart and the mind of God.

You know, sometimes I think that it's almost like we're convinced that we've exhausted all that the Bible can teach on this topic and study, and so we have to resort now to our own personal opinions, our own personal "I thinks," and, friends, that's just not true. Anybody that's honest or have thoroughly spent enough time in this Bible in a very Spirit-led way will very clearly agree with me, very easily agree with me that, friends, you could spend a lifetime studying this, and you are still not going to be able to exhaust everything that God has for us to be able to learn from here, and so there is--what I'm trying to say is that, because of that truth, we have no excuse to depart from what the Word is teaching us. We have no excuse to have our conversation leave that which the Bible itself is sharing with us, wants to share with us, is begging to share with us, and yet, friends, so often we find ourselves doing everything but.

All right, so that's my beef and challenge to you here. Boy, there's a few here today, isn't there? It's just kind of a list that this subject has kind of opened up for us. All right, so as we come to Sunday, of course, there's this story, if you've read the lesson about this rabbi, and the Jewish rabbi has this class of sleepy students, and he kind of throws out this challenging question. He says, "How do you know when the night has ended and the day has begun?" And so the students start responding with these kind of deep answers on how you can see that the light is just bright enough that you can know, "Okay, now the light--the night is over, and the day has begun," you know, or--and so on. And he says, "No, no, no, no, all wrong." And then, finally, he says, "You can know that the night has ended and the day has begun when you can look in the face of any stranger and recognize a brother or sister."

And, friends, of course, this is communicating the same truth that Jesus communicated through one of the most popular stories and parables in all the Scriptures, and that is of the good Samaritan. And so we can find that in Luke chapter 10, verses 30 to 37. We don't have time to read it here this morning, but the gist of the--and the context of that is that there is this lawyer, this expert in the law of God, not a lawyer like we think of today, but a lawyer in religious Scriptures, and in the Holy Scriptures, an expert in the Scriptures, and so he asks Jesus, and he says, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus says, "Well, what does the law say? What is your reading of it? How do you interpret it?" And he says, "Well, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, your strength, your soul, and your--" well, Jesus added, "and your mind." And then he says, "and also to love your neighbor as yourself." And Jesus responded, "You have answered rightly. Do these things, and you will have eternal life."

Well, the man then-- [clearing throat] --kind of coughed and cleared his throat, I'm sure, and shifted a little bit because he knew that that was the answer. In fact, the scholars have discovered that was the most popular, trendy answer of his day within Judaism. But he also knew that he almost, for certain, fell short of that, and so, in order to justify that shortcoming, he said, "Well, who is my neighbor?" And Jesus then shares the good Samaritan story. And, of course, Jews and--now, of course, but for somebody who may not know, but Jews and Samaritans hated each other.

They were neighbors to each other, they were cousins, they shared some of the same genes and background, but they hated each other, and so Jesus talks about this poor Jew that's going to Jericho. He gets robbed and mugged, beat up and left for dead on the side of the road, and priest comes by and ignores him. A Levite comes by, ignores him. It wasn't until a Samaritan, of all things, the cultural enemy

of Israelites, comes up to this Jewish Israelite, takes him, binds his wounds, takes his wine, his oil, pours it on his wounds, bandages him up, puts him on his donkey, walks him to an inn and stays overnight with him and nurses him at his own expense. And then, when he leaves, he gives extra money to the innkeeper and says, "Please take care of him until I come back from my business."

And so Jesus says, "Who was the neighbor of that Israelite?" And so the man kind of mumbles, and he's in a crowd. In front of it, he can't--he knows the answer is obvious, and so he says, "Well, the Samaritan." "Pardon me?" You can almost see Jesus saying, "Pardon me, clarify?" "Samaritan." "Samaritan, all right, yes," he says, "it is the Samaritan." So Jesus is sharing with us what He shared on the Sermon of the Mount, "Blessed are those--" you know, or not said "Blessed are those," He says, but "Love your neighbor--" not "love your neighbor"-- "Love your enemies and bless those who curse you."

Friends, this is the Great Commission and great principles that God has given to us and that we find clarified, and Jesus uses this parable to clarify the depth of the second commandment in the Bible. And so the lesson's author shares a burden that God also shares and expresses not only here, but also especially in the book of James, but throughout the New Testament, and that is this, that although the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the most cutting-edge church in the world, there's no church in the world that I am aware of or ever have come across that has as many cutting-edge Bible truths as the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

And, friends, we are blessed because of that. We have many more answers to the big questions and concerns to life, philosophy, and theology. Certainly, it clarifies many things and helps us to be more established in a very devoted and trusting relationship with Jesus Christ. But, friends, all of that, the judgment hour and the sanctuary truth, and all these different cutting edge truth, the Sabbath, and so on, all of it is worth nothing if we're not also living out a loving life, if we're not kind to other people, if we're not avoiding prejudices against others or thinking that some are less valuable than ourselves, and so driving this home in our church and church schools is essential.

Then Monday, it says--Monday goes on and it expands in a more comprehensive way the quoting from the Sermon of the Mount, which I just shared with you. That's Matthew chapter 5, verses 14 and 16. Actually, it's not what I just shared with you. In this case, it's "the light of the world," and Jesus says, "You are the light of the world," and to paraphrase and summarize, it says, "Therefore, go out and shine that your Father may be glorified in your good works." And so that's important for us to understand.

And then, when we come to Tuesday--points us back to the gospel commission and reminds us that, indeed, all of us are disciple-makers. All of us are to go, therefore, and make disciples. Sometimes we make the mistake of thinking that's the job of the evangelist, the pastor, or the Bible-worker, but that's not true. God has called us--for all of us to encourage people into a faith and to share our testimony and to share the Word of God. All of this is vital and important for you and I.

And then, finally, on Wednesday, we have "seeking the truth," and this is where I'd like to end off. Truth is certainly something that has become very unpopular in our day and age in the church world. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has not been immune to this. When I was baptized in 1992, there was a--some of the seniors in the church in which I joined would come up to me and they would talk about "the truth." And they would say, you know, "We need to go out and share the truth," or "I was just with my neighbor, and I was sharing with her the truth." And I'd never heard that term, and I thought, "What? That's a powerful but a new term to me and concept." And, friends, I have to say that it's been years since I've heard any church members--it seems like a died off with that senior generation, and now we're afraid to refer to the truth.

And so I just want to share with you, over the next two minutes, some quotes from the Bible, from the New Testament, from Jesus in particular, because truth appears 105 times in the New Testament. It's saturated with the concept of the truth. The truth is paramount to Jesus Christ, and it's paramount--He wants it to be paramount to you and me. In John 8:32, it says, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." In John chapter 1:17, it says, "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

In John chapter 4, verse 23, it says, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth." In John 14, verse 6, Jesus said to them, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." In John 15, verse 26, it says, "But when the Holy Spirit comes, whom I will send from the Father, the Spirit of truth proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me."

And then, finally, in John 17, verse 17, Jesus says to His Father, "Sanctify them," these new believers, "by Your truth. Your word is truth," He says. And then, finally, John chapter 18, verse 37, as He's talking to the Roman governor during His trial, He says, "For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the--" you guessed it-- "the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Now, friends, that's just a sampling of just the teachings and statements of Jesus alone, yet alone the apostles and Paul, and so on. And so, friends, we need to close here today, but I hope that this has been helpful for you and that you've been able to pick up something that is able to help your experience become that much more aligned with the truth because God has given us the truth.

This is our special offer, if you missed it at the beginning of the program, that we want to be able to take advantage of that. Please go ahead and call in to the information on the screen, and you can take advantage of it. You can call or get a digital copy of it as well. Until then, God bless you, and we look forward to seeing you next week.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the key word on your screen to 40544, or visit the web address shown on your screen, and be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want and, most important, to share it with others.

Doug Batchelor: Friends, we're out here in the Pacific Ocean, not too far from the island of Fiji, and we're getting ready to look at some wonders in the deep. The Bible says God made the heaven, the earth, and the sea, and there are things under the sea that are beautiful that many people have never seen. Some folks might just skim along, snorkel on the surface, but if you want to see the real majesty of the ocean, you've got to go deeper.

Because people don't have gills like fish, we have to do something extraordinary to be able to breathe below the surface. And because you have to breathe all the time, we need this special equipment. In the same way, the Bible says a Christian needs to pray without ceasing. We need to always be breathing the atmosphere of heaven if we're going to live a Christian life in this world below.

Wow, what a wonderful world.

Diana Dixon: My name is Diana Dixon. I'm a professional truck driver. In August the 4th, 2011, I stopped to help in an accident. male: Diana Dixon also tried to help. She parked her semi, jumped out, and headed toward the pickup. That's when she saw vehicles barreling toward her, so she reacted by

jumping off 475 to a road below. Diana: Well, pickup hits--clipped a semi, and I stopped to help, and I saw it in the mirror, so I walked back. Gentleman told me, he says, "Hey, you know, everything's okay, they called 9-1-1." And I looked over at the pickup, and there was a black pickup over there, and he was okay.

At about that time, I don't know how far I walked, but I walked far enough, and a semi hit him, and it imploded. I knew it was going to hit me. I had 30 seconds to decide, and I decided to jump.

Diana: Yeah, I jumped off the bridge. My back is broken.

Male: Where are you at?

Diana: I don't know.

Fractured my pelvis in 24 places, 5 broken ribs, C5 neck fracture. I had a collapsed lung. I had a lacerated bladder. I was bleeding internally. I had no marks on the outside of me at all but a scrape where my arm had scraped the concrete. From the chest down, I was on fire.

I was a dispatcher for a year after the accident, and I went back and finished my degree, and I went to Pittsburgh, threw a backpack over my back, walked like all the other students. I ran a marathon, and since then, I've been back to truck driving.

There was a gentleman I worked with, and one day, he was walking in, and he walked up to my desk, and I was reading my Bible, and he says, "Are you a believer?" And I said, "Yes," and he gave me some Amazing Facts study guides, and it just--it was an eye-opening experience for me. I mean, I started reading them, and I had a bunch of questions to ask him, so I got online, and I got on the Amazing Facts web page, and I just found it--information, just, that I'd never known.

I went back to work as a truck driver because that was my ministry. It was my ministry before the accident. And I was driving down the road, and I just needed a connection, and I was flipping through, and somehow, I ended up on YouTube, and next thing I know, "Amazing Facts," one of those things, would come up there, and I listened to it. I'm driving down the road. I got 11 hours of driving, so I listened to one, I listened to another one, and the more I listened to him, everything that I thought in my heart, I'd just click onto one of these YouTubes, and there he was giving me the answer.

I walked in a Seventh-day Adventist Church for the first time, and I felt at home. I was baptized in the Seventh-day Adventist Church because I had found the truth that I, just, was searching for and I had been praying about. Amazing Facts has been such an inspiration and important for my coming back into ministry, that I want to be able to give back to anyone that I can, and Amazing Facts, it is the backbone of my ministry. My name is Diana Dixon. Thank you for changing my life.

Doug: Hi, friends, this is Pastor Doug Batchelor. Would you like to hear an amazing fact? More and more of the world is turning now to natural forms of energy to try and find their power, and they're resorting to things like the wind farm that we have here in Jamaica at Wigton. You know, I remember years ago, my wife and I going to visit the Big Island of Hawaii, and we were amazed at all the potential there for natural power, but they weren't using it.

There, at the south part of the island, there was volcanic activity. You can make geothermal power there. If you went to Waimea, the wind was constantly blowing, but they had no windmills there. If you went over to Kona, sun always shines--solar electric. But they didn't have very much solar electric there. And if you went to Hilo, it was always raining--hydroelectric. And in spite of all that potential for power there on the Big Island of Hawaii, they were powering the island back then with dirty diesel generators.

Made me think about how we sometimes waste the power of God's Spirit that he's making available to us, and each of us can have that Spirit if we simply ask. You can read in Zechariah chapter 10. What do we do? Ask of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain, and He will send flashing clouds." Jesus also said in the book of Luke, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask?" When you look in the book of Acts, when the Holy Spirit was poured out, it says there was the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and that power that launched the church back then can still power your life today, friends. So why don't you ask Him?