



THE BODY OF BELIEVERS AND MISSION

World Changers

April 29, 2023

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Exodus 18:13-24 (NIV) • “The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, ‘What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?’

“Moses answered him, ‘Because the people come to me to seek God’s will. Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God’s decrees and instructions.’

“Moses’ father-in-law replied, ‘What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your

load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied.’

“Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said.”

Numbers 11:14-17 (NIV) • “‘I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. If this is how you are going to treat me, please go ahead and kill me—if I have found favor in your eyes—and do not let me face my own ruin.’

“The LORD said to Moses: ‘Bring me seventy of Israel’s elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the tent of meeting, that they may stand there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take some of the power of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will share the burden of the people with you so that you will not have to carry it alone.’”

Acts 6:1-7 (NIV) • “In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, ‘It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.’

"This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

"So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith."

Acts 10:41-43 (NIV) • "He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Mark 2:1-5 (NIV) • "A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.' "

2 Corinthians 2:14-17 (NIV) • "But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God."

Luke 9:46-50 (NIV) • "An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. Then he said to them, 'Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest.'

"'Master,' said John, 'we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us.'

"'Do not stop him,' Jesus said, 'for whoever is not against you is for you.'"

Romans 16:20 (NIV) • "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you."

Philippians 1:3-6 (NIV) • "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

(See additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT "THE BODY OF BELIEVERS AND MISSION"

All for One. God has chosen to let people represent Him to the world. While we are individual witnesses to God's goodness and grace, we are part of a larger body of people who speak on behalf of God. This lesson will explore the scenarios in Scripture in which teams were more effective than lone rangers. The ability to do great things for God's kingdom emerges as we understand the power of our collective strength instead of focusing only on our individual strengths. The notion of synergy plays well in this topic because the church is the greatest example of the whole being greater than the sum of all its parts. Our world has shifted to valuing individualism to the point of isolation.

Frankly, most people feel alone, and what is more distressing is that they tend to believe that this is the way it is supposed to be. As you scan the stories of the New Testament church it is hard to miss the individuals in the story, but their contribution to the mission of the church is highlighted. The collaboration of all ages, types, and styles illuminates the glory of God's kingdom and propels it forward by their collective strength.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "THE BODY OF BELIEVERS AND MISSION"

As a result of this lesson, we would like the students to be able to:

1. Explore the value of each person's having strengths and weaknesses.
2. Discover the force of a collective mission.
3. Practice being united together in mission even when we seem alone.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) old phonebook/directory, old T-shirt, or towel/cloth, toilet paper; (Activity B) small box of crayons, flipchart or sheet of poster board.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons, handout on page 54.

Applying • Paper, pens/pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.

3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • You will need an old phonebook or directory, old T-shirt or towel/cloth, and a roll of toilet paper. This activity requires as much preparation as you want to give it. You can simply have the items lying on tables and have the students creatively demonstrate how these items are weak and how they are strong. Or you can pre-cut and do a demonstration from the front using a few volunteers. (When students do this in groups, they tend to develop for themselves the many meanings that emerge from the exercise.)

Get set • The goal of this exercise is to determine the ripping point of the above materials, comparing the strength of each item in its individual form against its collective form. The pages of a phonebook are thin and easy to tear; however, as an entire book they can't be torn. A T-shirt can be torn once you break down the first few strings in the weave. The bottom line for this activity is to emphasize the ways that we are strong.

Go • Divide the students into groups of three or four and give each group a phonebook, a T-shirt, and a piece of cloth. **Say:** **If you were to illustrate how these items are weak and how they are strong in as many ways as possible, how would you best demonstrate it to others? Try to develop as many ideas about strengths and weaknesses as you can with each item. You will need to be able to demonstrate it to the group when you are done. Go!** (Give them a time limit to create some motivation.)

Debriefing • Ask: What were some of the more obvious lessons you learned about how things can be strong and weak? What insights did you gain that were unexpected? In what way are believers in a church stronger when they are united? (*Phonebook:* We are strong when we stay together. Weak when we are divided. *T-shirt:* Not hard to tear it once a few of the strings in the weave are torn, but it's hard to tear when there is a strong seam. *Cloth:* The thicker the texture and the more thread in it, the more difficult it is to tear.)

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • You will need a small box of crayons and a flipchart or sheet of poster board. The goal of this exercise is to demonstrate how each person is valued when we collaborate on a task. When we are isolated as individuals, we are limited in our abilities.

Get set • Set the poster board or flipchart up so everyone can use the blank page. Give each student one crayon. The point is simple: there are very few things (comparatively) that can be drawn and colored with only one color.

Go • Choose one student to stand and announce what color they have. Then have the students brainstorm what they could actually accurately draw and color with this one color. (*Note: Hairs can be split here. For instance, you can color an orange accurately with just the color orange. However, most oranges have different degrees*

of orange, not to mention a little green stem.) The object is to be reasonable. Focus on one color and brainstorm with the class what can be drawn and colored with just "light brown" or "blue green." Now, add a volunteer with another color and see what other things can now be drawn and colored. Write down the objects on the board as the students brainstorm for ideas. Continue brainstorming things that can be drawn with each new color added.

Debriefing • Ask: What difference would it have made if you had decided what you wanted to draw first, and then determined what colors you needed? What kind of process would have taken place? What would be the strength and the weakness of that? (The strength is that you focus on a goal and use just the resources you need to accomplish that goal. The weakness is that you label some colors as irrelevant because they are not needed for your current mission.) **What are the strengths and weaknesses of the first approach we tried?** (You value every color and find ways to color something because of the resources you have. Every color is used. The weakness is that you are not driven by a certain purpose, other than that everyone gets to be involved.) **Which method would work best to illustrate the mission of the church? Why?** (God uses every gift for His purpose, and there may be many more purposes than our minds can fathom. God is focused on getting us to heaven, and this is His one goal. We don't need to waste energy on other activities.)

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

Long ago two students graduated with honors from the Chicago-Kent College of Law. Overton finished at the top of the class and was honored at graduation for his achievements. Overton was blind but managed quite well in spite of his disability. When he received his award, he made it clear that half of the credit for his achievement belonged to his friend, Kasprzyzak. They had met at the start of school.

The armless Kasprzyzak guided Overton up and down the stairs while Overton carried his books and briefcase for him. Overton would hold the heavy law books while Kasprzyzak would read aloud what his friend could not see. This friendship became a shining example of something called interdependence. Alone, they each might have been able to manage somehow. But together they succeeded far beyond the norm.

Debriefing • Ask: In what way could this story help people in the church work together more and fight less? How do our differences separate us and bring us together? In what ways can you accomplish more if you work with another person or in a group relating to home, school, and church?

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

There is a saying, “There is no ‘I’ in Team.” This is partly true when you look at the final outcome. But in God’s kingdom you can’t avoid the beautiful truth that His children are all different, unique, and precious as individuals. If it is true that Christ would have died for just one soul, then it is important to celebrate how important we are as individuals. But being an individual in God’s kingdom doesn’t cancel out the collective importance of the team. It is the differences of individuals that make the whole group so dynamic.

Consider the disciples arguing about who was the greatest (Luke 9:46-50). Here is an example of individualism getting in the way of the purpose. Think about how different Simon the Zealot, a trained assassin whose mission in life was to kill Roman sympathizers, was compared to Matthew, a tax collector soaking the Jewish people for the gain of the Roman Empire. They worked side by side because they possessed

individual qualities that allowed them to do great things. However, selfishness had to be relinquished and the goal of the mission cherished.

Say: Notice what Jesus does with this band of unique people. Have someone read Luke 10:1: “After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go” (NIV). Next, have someone read **Luke 10:17**: “The seventy-two returned with joy and said, ‘Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name’” (NIV).

Say: It seems that great things can happen when unique individuals collaborate for the purpose of others, rather than for their own agendas.

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s section of the lesson.

Ask: The story in the student lesson demonstrates how amazing things can be accomplished with unique people working together. What did you learn from this story about how the church should function? What do you think helped the Waldensians stay so strong in the face of persecution? How do you think the preaching and martyrdom of the Waldensians impacted on the other people who witnessed their faithfulness to God? What does their example teach to our church today?

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Share the following illustration:

Gulls are majestic, graceful animals. They elegantly fly in flocks with tremendous agility and skill. They are simply beautiful to watch! And, if you look carefully, gulls are very similar in their markings, with only a few differences between birds. Do you know what would happen if you tied a red ribbon to the leg of a gull? The other gulls in the flock would simply

pulverize and peck away at the marked bird because they are so fiercely competitive. Their jealousy would mark the end of life for the unfortunate gull that was marked with the ribbon.

Oftentimes when people stand out in a crowd as a leader or a spokesperson, they also get marked. Jealousy and dissension can and does ensue. But the best leaders are ones who honor and value those who are just as capable or gifted in other areas. These leaders are called servant leaders. They make those around them look good and feel valuable.

Say: Let's look at some of the servant leadership stories in the Bible. Have three volunteers read the following stories out loud: **Mark 2:1-5** (it took several no-name people to get the paralytic to Jesus; and Jesus healed him based on "their" faith); **Acts 6:1-7** (dividing the responsibilities and empowering others to do what they do well produced huge results); **Exodus 18:13-24** (Moses' father-in-law gave him good advice about distributing the work and allowing other capable individuals to assist in the administration of justice). After each story discuss what the servant leadership looked like and how the group accomplished more than individuals alone could have.

D. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Distribute the handout found on page 54.

Say: The following passage of Scripture is the last message in Paul's letter to the church at Rome. You will notice that he finishes his letter by personally naming various individuals. Who are these people? In groups of two to four, read through Romans 16 and highlight all the names of people mentioned. Next, circle the names of those you know something about or have heard of before in Scripture. Go through the passage again and very carefully examine what Paul says about each person or group. Sometimes he gives clues to what they are like. The point is to try to identify some quality or significant characteristic that causes Paul to mention

them. What do we know about these people based upon what is in the text? Make notes by their names and be ready to report.

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Say: Using a writing style similar to Paul's, rewrite this last chapter of Romans from the handout, using the names of your church members and those who have been helpful to you in your spiritual journey. You could mention a youth director, former pastor or teacher, or friend—but the important thing is to focus on the church community that is around you and the work they are doing. Share the letter with the rest of the class if you feel comfortable doing so.

Debriefing • Ask: What did you learn about people in your church community that you may not have thought of before? How does acknowledging people's strengths build unity? Can you think of scenarios in which this exercise would be difficult? Describe.

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Who do you know that is gifted but recognizes other people and their gifts as well?
2. When in your life have you felt the energy and unity of a team?
3. Have you ever been a part of a team that fell apart because of selfishness? Was there anything someone could have done to fix the problem?
4. If you were to take five people from the Bible on a mission trip, which five would you take and why?
5. How can you become a team player in your local church?

6. What leaders do you know that need a note of encouragement? What servers and fellow followers need to be noticed and thanked for their quiet service?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

It becomes very clear when in every aspect of life people use the principle of collaboration. Collaboration doesn't downplay the unique attributes of people, but it colors the scene in such a way that it beautifies the whole. God needs us to be mindful of one another's gifts and skills. In addition, He wants us to focus on the end goal, building His kingdom. The success of our church depends on a generation who can value the differences in people and embrace their united potential for God's cause. Are you willing to be a part of that generation?

FOR LESSON FIVE:

THIS HANDOUT IS FOR CONNECTING TO LIFE

Romans 16 (NIV)

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

Greet also the church that meets at their house.

Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.

Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.

Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test.

Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.

Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew.

Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.

Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.

Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.

Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.

Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sis-

ter, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them.

Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings.

I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, my fellow Jews.

I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord.

Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings.

Erastus, who is the city's director of public works, and our brother Quartus send you their greetings.

Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith—to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.



STUDENT LESSON

THE BODY OF BELIEVERS AND MISSION

World Changers

April 29, 2023

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 12, The Church:** “The church is God’s family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 93-95

WORLD CHANGERS

The Waldensians were a small group of faithful Bible-believing Christians who dared to be different. They refused to accept the decrees of the state-sponsored church in place of the Word of God. For them, the commands of God were more important than the traditions of people. The state church responded with an army to destroy them.

Along with thousands of others the Waldensians died rather than compromise their integrity. They accepted martyrdom rather than surrender their faith. The witness of these faithful martyrs calls us to loyalty. Their testimony calls us to an unwavering commitment to God. God is calling this generation to a deeper commitment. He is calling us to an uncompromising faith, to a steadfast loyalty to His Word.

The purpose of the church is not to compromise with the world; it is to change it. It is not to conform to the world; it is to transform it. The church is not merely a corporate institution, although the church is organized for a mission. The church is a body of converted Christians saved by grace, committed to His will, with a mission to the world. The church is God’s people redeemed to serve, meeting needs everywhere in Jesus’ name. The church is administrators, pastors, laypeople, youth, children, you, and me sharing His love, proclaiming His truth to everyone everywhere. The church is us—all of us.

The stalwart faith of the Waldensians echoes down the corridors of time. The unshakable faith of these heroes of yesterday speaks to our hearts. Today, why not determine again, by God’s grace, to be faithful until He comes?

—Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, pp. 118, 119, 173.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 12:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:14, 15.

- » A group of youth was working on a service project together. They were washing cars and cleaning them thoroughly, inside and out. No donations were accepted; it was a gift to the community. Unfortunately, a thoughtless comment about someone's inadequacy at washing cars slipped out. Everyone had been working so well together; however, in one moment it seemed that the mission was gone, the team was split, and what was fun had become a chore. What would you do if you were the leader and had several hours of work left to do? How would you get your team back on track?
- » When have you experienced synergy before? (When the whole is better than the value of all the parts.) When have you had a great team success? Describe what happened and show how the team was more effective than any one person's strengths.

Monday

BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE CHURCH

- » Read Matthew 28:19, 20; Ephesians 2:19-22; 2 Peter 2:9.
- » Christ is the foundation of the church. He has saved us. God gives each of us a special gift (talent) and the Holy Spirit helps us to use our talents to build up His church and share His message of salvation with others. He promises to always be with us.
- » As a part of God's "household," what goals can you set that will help you today, this week, this month to use your talents to work together with others in the church to tell others about His love?
- » Cross out the word "disunity" every time it appears and then rewrite the verse below so you can read the message God has for His followers.

"Bdisunityydisunitythdisunitysdisunityall

disunitywidisunitydisunitylldisunitykdisunity
nodisunitywdisunity thdisunityatdisunityyo
disunityuadisunityredisunityMdisunityydisunity
didisunityscidisunitypledisunitysidisunityfy
disunityoudisunityhdisunityvedisunityldisunity
ovedisunityfodisunityrodisunitynedisunityan
disunityothdisunityer" (disunityJdisunityoh
disunityndisunity 13:35, NKJV).

Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.
- » While a group were building a church in Sarawak, it became clear how all the parts are needed for the whole project to work. For example, during the building project the early risers would bring bags of cement to be mixed before breakfast. As every new person trickled in to help, more work was accomplished; windows were placed in the walls, lumber was cut, and water was distributed to thirsty workers. Some were encouraging; others were teaching; still others were arguing about what needed to happen right away. The older, more experienced men and women found young people listening to their wisdom. Those who were only young at heart were inspired by the dedication of the youth. It was because all hands were on deck that the goal of the mission prevailed. Not one person could take credit, and not one person entertained the impossible notion that they could have done it alone. So it is with the church—your church.
- » It is no wonder when Jesus said "You are the salt of the earth" and "You are the light of the world," He was using the plural form of "you." In other words, when you all come together with all your different personalities—you have a power greater than one person who seems great.
- » Scan through the verses mentioned in this lesson, and you will see that we were designed to need each other in the same way

that the body needs a hand, or a foot, or the eyes. It might be one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome, but the collective work of a church on a mission is the church at its finest. Don't think for a moment that it will be easy, but know that it is worth it. When we truly embrace this truth as a church, we will have success beyond our wildest dreams. The possibilities are endless.

» "Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin" (Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 286).

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Decode the following message by inserting each substitute letter. The text is from the New King James Version.

S	F	Y	U	H	D	Q	A	E	R	N	P	C	L	O	Z	X	K	M	W	I	V	T	G	J	B
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Thursday CONNECTING

- » Read Hebrews 10:23-25.
- » Review the memory text.
- » As you read the writings of Paul you can't help noticing what a team player he is. He is a legend, yet throughout his letters he names people he notices doing the work of God. He learned this from God Himself. If you ever wonder if God notices the little things you do, then be reminded of the promise that "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6, NKJV). What is so amazing is the way that God sees both our strengths and weaknesses and still believes the best is yet to come for all of us. Don't miss out on the moments in which you can join the crowd of believers as they work toward heaven's goal. At times you might feel like one sheep in a huge flock, but be reminded that the Shepherd knows your name.
- » "In every word and act, kindness and love will be revealed; and as each worker fills his appointed place faithfully, the prayer of Christ for the unity of His followers will be answered, and the world will know that these are His disciples" (Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 483).

Friday APPLYING

- » Read Romans 16.
- » Put yourself in Paul's shoes and write a modern-day chapter about your church. Make sure you reread Romans 16 to get a feel for what Paul was doing. Try to sound like Paul—if you can. Use the names of families, pastors, teachers, and elders to reflect the work that is taking place in your area. Paul greeted them, acknowledged their gifts and sacrifices, and simply said hello. Write your letter on the lines below or on separate paper:

