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TEACHING STUDENT NURSES SABBATH KEEPING

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### Introduction

Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) student nurses, looking forward to employment in acute care settings, may expect to work Sabbath shifts for a professional life time. Often the student nurses in SDA schools of nursing are scheduled to work on Sabbath as part of their practicum. SDA student nurses thus have questions early in their nursing careers about working on the Seventh-day Sabbath. The problem of SDA nurses working on Sabbath cannot be solved with freeing them of Sabbath shifts. The care of patients goes on for 24 hours a day for seven days a week. In addition, the fourth commandment, in fact, requires Sabbath observance of "the stranger within thy gates" (Ex. 20:10) thus plainly including non-SDA nurses in the Sabbath command to keep Sabbath when working within SDA institutions. Instilling into nursing students principles of appropriate Sabbath observance is, thus, a significant responsibility of teachers in SDA nursing programs.

### Purpose

This paper was written for two purposes. The first purpose is to present the principles of true Sabbath keeping as given in the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White. The second purpose is to outline a unit of instruction for teaching student nurses how to keep Sabbath holy in the work setting.

The Bible refers to the care of the sick on the Sabbath, but of course does not refer to nurses specifically. The writings of E.G. White mention nurses occasionally but make many references to workers in SDA institutions. The intent of the review of Bible and E.G. White writings is to locate general concepts and principles of Sabbath keeping.

### Assumptions

The world view that guided the ideas expressed in this paper are contained in the following assumptions:

1. The Bible and the writings of E.G. White, as God's messenger, reveal the essential principles of Sabbath observance.

2. There should be a distinct and observable difference in the activities and attitudes of the SDA nurse on Sabbath as compared with other days of the week.

3. The principles of true Sabbath observance should be taught in every SDA school of nursing.

#### Method

Based on the three assumptions given above, the method used in this paper was an exhaustive review of the Bible and E.G. White for statements and incidents having to do with the meaning and the observance of the Seventh-day Sabbath. All Bible references are from the King James Version of the Bible. References to E.G. White books follow the abbreviations (see code at end of reference list) followed in the E.G. White Index. An exhaustive list of references in the Bible to the Sabbath, fourth commandment, and the seventh-day were compiled from Strong,s (1980) exhaustive concordance. The scripture data base consisted of 51 passages.

E.G. White references to the Sabbath were compiled from the Index to the writings of E.G.White (1963). Each reference so obtained was examined. Duplication of concepts and ideas was handled by selecting the one(s) best stated or from the source most likely to be available to the user. An effort was made to avoid direct quotations unless succinct and exactly expressing the concept.

E.G.White had much to say on Sabbath observance by families and use of the Sabbath hours for parents with children. The details of family observance of the Sabbath in the home are not covered in this paper but the interested reader is referred to the excellent coverage contained in Child Guidance pp 527-537. This passage may be read to imply that nurses with young children should be given special consideration when planning the Sabbath work schedule at SDA institutions.

The statements from the scriptures and from E.G. White were organized inductively into topics. From the related statements general principles were identified and used in building a unit of instruction on Sabbath keeping for nurses.

The following review of literature is organized under the following eight sections: 1) Meaning and significance of the Sabbath, 2) Sanctions attached to Sabbath keeping, 3) How to keep the Sabbath, 4) Groups who may work on Sabbath, 5) Keeping the Sabbath while working, 6) Hazards of working on Sabbath, 7) Examples of Sabbath observance, and 8) Call for reform on Sabbath keeping.

#### Review of the Literature

The name, "Seventh-day Adventist" was given to the SDA church according to light from heaven (2 SM 384) thus we should be glad to be identified as the people who observe the commandments of

God. White states that "The reason why the youth of the present age are not more religiously inclined is that their education is defective"(2T 701). The purpose for this review of literature is to identify principles of Sabbath observance and to use these to improve the instruction of our youth.

### Section 1: Meaning and Significance of the Sabbath

Scripture. Various reasons are given in scripture for keeping the Seventh-day Sabbath. The Sabbath rest was instituted at the end of creation week to be a memorial of creation (Gen. 2:2,3). It was blessed and sanctified by God. Later in history, the Sabbath was given an enhanced significance as a memorial of God's deliverance of His people from captivity in Egypt (Deut. 5:12-15). God's expressed command is adequate reason for a Christian to keep the Sabbath holy (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15; Lev. 19:30). God intended that man should be "refreshed" by keeping the Sabbath (Ex. 23:12). The Sabbath is to enable us to know God as the One who sanctifies us (Eze. 20:12).

The Sabbath has deep spiritual meaning for the commandment keeping Christian. The fourth commandment states that the Sabbath celebrates God as the creator of all (Ex. 20:8-11) and the deliverer of His people (Deut. 5:12-15). The Sabbath is a sign forever of God's sanctifying power and the covenant relationship between God and His people (Ex. 31:13-17; Eze. 20:20). Keeping the Sabbath holy is an act of worship to God that will endure forever (Isa. 66:23). The Sabbath becomes a foretaste of the time when God's people enter into His rest. We enter God's rest by ceasing from our own works. In this sense, the Sabbath becomes a symbol of righteousness by faith (Heb. 4:1-11). The first angel's message of Rev. 14:7 is a call to worship God as the Creator. SDA Christians believe that the seal of God, which is to be given to all God's people in the last days of earth history, is the observance of the Seventh-day Sabbath (Rev. 7:1-4).

E.G.White. White sums up four meanings for Sabbath keeping as a sign:

1. A sign of honoring God, obeying His will as expressed in His law (6T 349-350; 7T 105; TM 134).
2. A sign of God as Creator (6T 350). The Sabbath will commemorate creation through all eternity (DA 283).
3. A sign of sanctification (6T 350; DA 288).
4. A sign of God's covenant with man. The Sabbath keeper "fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise" (6T 350).

The Sabbath is the means of preserving a knowledge of God (8T

198), and thus preventing idolatry (PK 182). The Sabbath is for God's glory and for man's benefit (1T 532). It sets a limit on the demands of labor (Ed. 251) and channels man's gratitude toward God (PP 48). Sabbath keeping is central to divine worship (GC 437-438). Keeping the Sabbath holy is thus essential for the well being of the body, mind, and spirit of man.

### Section Two: Sanctions Attached to Sabbath Keeping

Scripture. The benefits of keeping God's judgments and statutes, including the Sabbath include joy in the heart, material prosperity, peace, protection from enemies, God's presence, and assurance of a place in God's house (Isa. 56:1-7; Isa. 58:13,14; Lev. 26:2-13). The results of profaning the Sabbath are always destructive. In ancient Israel Sabbath breaking was punishable by death (Ex. 31:15) to demonstrate the seriousness of the crime. The end of the Kingdom of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem came as a result of disregard of God's judgments and statutes including Sabbath keeping (Jer. 17:21-27; Eze. 22:8,26; Eze. 23:38). Despising God's holy things and profaning the Sabbath are destructive to the God-man relationship leading in the end to God's fury- God giving man up to follow his own way, the end of which is destruction (Eze. 20:11-26).

E.G. White. Sabbath keeping is of inestimable benefit to man. A special benefit is conferred (6T 362) which includes spiritual and physical health (2T 705; TM 136). Sabbath keeping brings relaxation and relief from anxiety (1T 532-533). Man in close communion with God is guarded from idolatry and atheism (PK 182; LS 96). Spiritual strength is given (4T 539-540) for coping with forces of evil. "The Sabbath is a golden clasp that unites God and His people. It means salvation to keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord" (ML 287).

The rewards of Sabbath keeping are great as are the consequences for failing to keep the Sabbath holy. God cannot bless those who wilfully violate the Sabbath (1T 532), and without obedience to His law no worship is pleasing to Him (GC 436). Health and life itself are endangered by disobedience (1T 532-533), spirituality withers (4T 539-540), and the persistent violator will obliterate God from the mind and thus be unable to resist evil, falling then, a easy prey to Satan (PP 336). Eventually, the person following the course of disobedience will take sides with the enemy (TM 132) and be unable to avoid receiving "the sign of the beast" at the end of time (4T 251). The final end of this person is to incur the wrath of God (GC 605).

Sabbath keeping thus is vital if the Christian is to enjoy God's blessing in this life and eternal life in the future. The results of persistent disregard of God's fourth commandment is a withering away of the spiritual nature, an inability to resist evil and eventually eternal death.

### Section Three: How the Sabbath Should Be Kept

Scripture. The Bible contains specific guidelines for how the Sabbath is to be kept. Food is to be prepared on Friday and no cooking is to be done on Sabbath (Ex. 16:22-26; Ex. 35:2-3). God's people are to work six days but rest on the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15). The injunction to rest included the members of the household, servants, visitors, strangers to the household, and even beasts of burden (Ex. 23:12). Even high work demand should not be made an excuse to work on Sabbath (Ex. 34:21) and Sabbath time should not be used to prepare for or to engage in a commercial enterprise (Neh. 13:15-22). No buying should be done on the Sabbath (Neh. 10:31) nor work done for profit or gain (Jer. 17:21-27; Neh. 13:10-22). The Sabbath is to be used for holy convocations (Lev. 23:3) and worship of God (Isa. 66:23). Jesus even instructed His disciples to pray that fleeing from the yet to come destruction of Jerusalem not be on the Sabbath (Matt. 24:20).

E.G. White. We are given much guidance from the writings of E.G. White on how to keep the Sabbath. Sabbath preparation should be done all during the week (6T 353) including that for physical, mental, spiritual and refreshment. Secular work is to be laid aside before sundown (6T 355), the mind is to be withdrawn from worldly cares and business (6T 356), and differences with others made right to rid the soul of "all bitterness and wrath and malice" (6T 356). The Christian is to guard the fringes of the Sabbath with care that no portion of this precious time be lost (PP 296). Time should be taken to evaluate the spiritual progress made during the week and to welcome the Sabbath with worship (6T 356).

The Sabbath should be a day of many activities. One of the foremost is that of worship, song, and prayer (6T 367). Well fitting, neat clothing should be reserved for the Sabbath worship services (6T 355). God desires a close commune with man on this day. Time should be spent in meditation and reflection on God's goodness and greatness, thus filling the heart with love and reverence (PP 47). The worshiper should envision the inner courts of God's temple in heaven and join in spirit, the worship of celestial beings around God's throne (6T 368). A great benefit of having a day of rest is the fellowship it allows with other Christians, comparing experiences and affirming the blessed hope (6T 362; 2T 583). The heart will glow with warmth and the mind will receive wisdom from this fellowship (6T 362). The intellect is strengthened through Bible study (Ed 251-252). Time should be spent in nature. This activity is especially important for parents with children. In nature the mind is drawn to contemplation of God's goodness, power and wisdom. The heart is uplifted to Him in gratitude for all His benefits (6T 358; PP 48).

The Sabbath should be a day of Joy, uncluttered with burden-

some requirements (DA 206, 289). To keep the Sabbath holy, man must himself be holy, covered with Christ's robe of righteousness (DA 283).

The Sabbath should not be used as a means of making up sleep lost while over working on the other days of the week (CG 528, 530). Meals should be more simple on the Sabbath to avoid over loading the stomach (6T 357). A Christian should find ways to help others on this day for man should not rest from doing good (DA 207). In sum, the Sabbath should be spent in healthful rest, worship and holy deeds (DA 207). "The Sabbath— Oh! Make it the sweetest, the most blessed day of the week..." (CG 532). The Sabbath should be closed with worship (6T 359).

Appropriate Sabbath keeping will be the issue in the great final conflict (6T 352, the line of demarkation between God's followers and those of Satan (7T 108), the test of loyalty to God (GC 605). God can be trusted to honor the faith of the one who chooses to obey Him at all costs (Ev 237, 240). We can trust God to care for the needs of the individual and his family if the livelihood is lost because of refusing to work on Sabbath (Ev 238). We are not to bind ourselves in partnership with those who do not honor God's commands (7T 108) although we should treat all with kindness and tact. We should obey God even if it is at great inconvenience to ourselves or to others (7T 122). We are to be careful not to use the principle of doing good on the Sabbath to open the door to carrying out almost any activity we desire on that day (2TT 182; 4T 253). We serve a jealous God who wants our full allegiance, given with joy, and with great appreciation of Him as our Creator. God is jealous for He wants us to live, not to die.

#### Section Four: Groups Who May Work on Sabbath

Scripture. The Scriptures make note of several groups of individuals who were required to work on Sabbath. The priests had extra duties to perform because the sacrifices were more numerous on the Sabbath (Num. 28: 9,10) and the preparing and changing of the show bread in the temple was done on Sabbath (Lev. 24:5-9; 1 Chron. 9:32). The priests performed circumcision on Sabbath when that was the 8th day after birth. Jesus did not fault the priests for this use of the Sabbath, but extended the concept to include doing deeds of mercy on Sabbath (John 7:23-29). Jesus stated that His father worked and so did He on Sabbath (John 5:19). Many instances in the life of Jesus illustrate the appropriateness of meeting the needs of those who are suffering on the Sabbath (See section seven). Groups who must work on Sabbath, or work harder on that day, include religious leaders and those who care for the sick.

E.G. White. Sabbath work is an obligation for some individuals. Persons in this group do not live above the law, are

not exempted from its requirements, but fulfill the law in the highest sense. God will not hold the person guiltless who fails to relieve suffering on any day of the week (DA 207). SDA health institutions are established to relieve the sick, to awaken a spirit of inquiry, to disseminate light, and to advance reform (7T 104-105). These then, should be in the forefront of observing the Sabbath and upholding God's laws. Those who minister to the sick are doing God's will, for He Himself did not neglect suffering persons on Sabbath (7T 106). The persons who do not give direct patient care are also serving God, including those who prepare and serve meals to others in the institution (7T 122)). The priests in the temple worked hardest on the Sabbath in service to God (DA 285). God works on Sabbath, upholding the universe and answering prayer (DA 206). Those who work to relieve suffering, those who support by their labors the ones who are engaged in direct care of the suffering, and those who lead out in worship are honoring God by their Sabbath activities.

#### Section Five: Keeping Sabbath while Working

The Bible does not give specific instructions for keeping the Sabbath holy while working on Sabbath, except by examples that will be covered under Section Seven. E.G. White specifies activities that are not appropriate as well as the attitudes and helps that will maintain allegiance to God while working on Sabbath..

Labor on the Sabbath to relieve suffering and to comfort the sorrowing are not only approved by God but are obligatory (WM 77). Helping the sick is keeping the Sabbath as much as leading a division of the Sabbath School, both are services to God (3SM 259).

God does not approve of doing unnecessary activities on the Sabbath, such as dwelling on worldly things, laying plans for the week ahead, discussing business (PP 307), or doing one's own pleasure (MM 215). Just as in managing one's own private life, the worker and the leadership in the institution, should plan ahead to avoid unnecessary work. No treatments or surgeries should be done on the Sabbath unless these are needed to relieve suffering or are of an emergency nature (MM 214-215).

Mere acts do not fulfill God's will. The Christian working on Sabbath should bring an attitude pure toward God and a heart willing to give Him service. Keeping Sabbath does not imply somberness or gloom. The worker should manifest a bright and cheerful face (6T 365) while at the same time showing a spirit of self denial and self-sacrifice (MM 216). The worker should keep the mind uplifted to God in Prayer and trust Him in a special way on Sabbath (3SM 265). "It is the service of love that God values" (DA 286).



Certain attitudes should not be manifested by the Christian working on Sabbath. An outward show of Sabbath keeping is a mockery (DA 286). The one who is working only or primarily for economic gain is not serving God. Sabbath work should not be done for profit or because of economic necessity (4T 251; 1T 532; DA 207). Physicians are advised to put money received for Sabbath work into the welfare fund (MM 216).

Individuals who must work on the Sabbath can call for help. Even while the hands are busy, the heart can be lifted in prayer. "God takes care of you in the place it is your duty to be" (CH 422-424). Those who work for God on the Sabbath can believe Him, take Him at His word, and "the blessings will come" (4T 539).

God desires a whole hearted service. A commitment to God should control the life (4T 494). A heart full of love to God will shed light, comfort, and peace on others. The service of such a worker will be characterized by tact, simplicity and usefulness—controlled by unselfish love. Such a life "leaves a track of light wherever its possessor may go" (PP 667). People will be attracted to such Christians.

The Sabbath is a precious gift given to men. "The Sabbath was made in Eden, when all the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. God has placed it in our charge. Let us keep it pure and holy" MM 215).

#### Section Six: Hazards To the Christian Working on Sabbath

Adventist Christians who must work on Sabbath are at special risk. There is danger of manifesting a spirit of irreverence and carelessness even in our own health care institutions with respect to Sabbath observance (7T 106; MM 50). The following dangers are prevalent:

1. Falling into the habit of doing unnecessary work (CH 422).
2. Losing a sense of the sacredness of the Sabbath (MM 215).
3. Forsaking public worship even when it would be possible to attend (4T 539).
4. Becoming weary and demoralized without the refreshment of the Sabbath rest and becoming no longer conscious of the presence of God (MM 215-216).
5. Unresponsiveness to God's spirit due to repeated violations of the Sabbath. At this stage, severe damage has been done to the Christian experience (4T 247-254).

Such persons are poor role models for others. There are strong and subtle influences to follow the ways of the world (4T:

147) and to become willful transgressors of God's law (4T 247-254). If this be so with workers in SDA institutions, how much more are those in danger who work in non-SDA health care settings. The church should be concerned for those who must work on Sabbath for these persons have special responsibilities and are in special peril (CH 422).

#### Section Seven: Examples of Sabbath Observance

Scripture. We have been given many examples of Sabbath keeping that met the approval of God. The miracle of the manna in the wilderness (Ex. 16:22-29) teaches the importance of the Sabbath, and preparing for it on Friday. Jesus attended the synagogue on Sabbath and took part in the services (Matt. 12:9; Mark 1:21; Mark 3:1; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:16; Luke 6:6; Luke 13:14). Jesus used the Sabbath hours to engage in teaching truth to others (Luke 4:31). This example of Jesus was followed by the apostle Paul and his associates (Acts 13:14-15, 42-44; Acts 16: 13-15; Acts 17: 1-3; Acts 18:4). Jesus gave an example of resting on the Sabbath while in the tomb (Mark 15:42-47, 16:1; Luke 23:54-56, 24:1; John 19:31, 38-42, 20:1).

Jesus used the episode of His disciples picking and threshing grain with their hands when hungry on the Sabbath to point out that meeting human need is not contrary to God's will (Matt. 12:1-9; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5). In the days of Jesus, the religious leaders had obscured God's will for keeping the Sabbath by burdensome requirements inspired by Satan (DA 284). Jesus restored the true concept of Sabbath keeping by His words and acts.

Jesus performed five miracles of healing on the Sabbath:

1. The man at the pool of Bethesda ill for 38 years (John 5:1-18).
2. The beggar blind from birth (John 9:1-41).
3. The man with dropsy (Luke 14:1-6).
4. The woman with an infirmity for 18 years (Luke 13:10-16).
5. The man with the withered hand (Matt. 12:9-13; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11).

Two miracles were actually performed in the synagogue. For each miracle, Jesus' enemies condemned Him for Sabbath breaking. In each case the one healed had a chronic disease or condition that might have been deferred until a week day. In three cases Jesus cited the need of a person as being more legitimate than that of an animal being pulled out of a pit or being lead from the stall to drink on the Sabbath. Jesus was not condemning kindness to

animals but saying that human need was even more legitimate to attend on the Sabbath. In the case of the blind beggar Jesus stated that doing such acts was His divine commission. Jesus example teaches that relief of even chronic need on the Sabbath is approved of by God. Worth noting also is that Christ received no monetary reward for His acts of healing.

The Bible also gives negative examples of Sabbath keeping. During the Exodus, a man was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath. The act was in direct defiance of God's stated will. There was no intent in the man's actions to relieve need and he knew the commandment and the penalty for disobedience. The man was stoned by the congregation by God's direct orders (Num. 15:32-36). One of the many sins of the nation of Judah that resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the people was social injustice and failure to honor the Sabbath (Neh. 13:17,18; Isa. 1:11-20; Jer. 17:21-27; Eze. 22:8,26). The attitude toward the Sabbath was "When will the Sabbath be gone so we may set forth wheat?" (Amos 8:5). After the return from the exile, Nehemiah found church members harvesting, preparing goods for market, and transporting them on the Sabbath (Neh. 13:4-31). This activity called for reform action by the prophet of God. Thus, Sabbath activity unrelated to relief of human need, that is engaged in for profit, is strongly condemned.

E.G.White. Examples of Sabbath keeping given in the E.G. White writings are those given in the Bible. Thus this section will only include a few ideas given in comment on the Bible incidents.

Sabbath observance, in Old Testament times, distinguished God's people from all others (8T 198). However, in the days of Jesus the Jewish leaders had obscured God's will with regard to keeping the Sabbath by imposing burdensome requirements inspired by Satan (DA 284). Jesus undertook the Sabbath miracles to show that the true meaning of the Sabbath involved relief of suffering and human need (3SM 259). Jesus example and words communicated the truth about how to keep the Sabbath. Jesus spent many of the Sabbath hours in healing and teaching (3SM 259). Christ rested after the work of creation was finished and also after the work of redemption was completed (DA 769-770). Jesus life on earth was a perfect demonstration of doing God's will and keeping the commandments. His endorsement of the lawfulness of performing deeds of mercy on the Sabbath does not constitute an "indulgence from heaven" for nurses to be exempt from keeping Sabbath. We need to rethink nursing on Sabbath to bring our practice fully in conformity to God's plan.

#### Section Seven: Calls for Sabbath Reform

Scripture. Sabbath reform goes hand in hand with revivals. Sabbath keeping had faded from the practice of the Jews when they

were slaves in Egypt. God impressed upon them the importance of keeping the Sabbath holy by stating and restating the ten commandments (Ex. 20:8-11; Ex. 23:12; Deut. 5:12-15). The death penalty was ordered by God for desecrating the Sabbath (Ex. 31:14-17; Num. 15:32-36) thus emphasizing the fact that desecration of the Sabbath results in alienation between God and man. Persisted in this behavior, ends in eternal death. The 40 year delay of wandering in the wilderness was the result of disregard of God's statutes and judgments, including specific mention of polluting the Sabbath (Eze. 20:11-26).

The reform instituted in Hezekiah's time (11 Chron. 29-31) involved a return to keeping God's laws. The record states "In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart and prospered" (11 Chron. 31:21). The reform instituted by King Josiah was initiated by finding the book of the law (11 Chron. 34:14-19). God, through His prophets, entreated His people to come back to keeping His statutes and judgments including specific calls for Sabbath reform before the fall of Jerusalem to the forces of Nebuchadnezzar (Isa. 56:1-7, 58:14; Jer. 17:21-27; Eze. 20:11-26, 22:8, 26-31). Sabbath reform was an integral part of the reform post exile instituted by Nehemiah (Neh. 10:31, 13:10-31). Jesus' teachings and Sabbath miracles were a call for Sabbath reform in His day.

E.G. White. The law of God is the foundation of all enduring reformations (BT. 199), thus, "in the closing work of God on earth the standard of His law will again be exalted" (PK 186). In the closing days of earth's history God's people will stand before the world as reformers (PK 678). There is a special effort to be made for Sabbath reform in hospitals and sanitariums operated by the SDA church. The workers in these institutions often do not follow that which is their duty and privilege to do and so they are often weary and demoralized (MM 215-216; CH 422). God's people need to make a commitment to true Sabbath observance in all aspects of life. "our questions should be, 'what is God's command? and what His promise?' Knowing these, we shall obey the one and trust the other" (Ev 242).

#### Principles of Sabbath Keeping

The results of the review of literature are summarized into 14 principles of Sabbath keeping. These principles, and the resource material suggested in the next section, became the basis for the unit of instruction for teaching student nurses Sabbath keeping. These principles are:

1. Sabbath keeping involves the whole person: body, mind, and spirit.
2. Sabbath keeping involves a whole week of planning for

appropriate Sabbath keeping.

3. Sabbath keeping is a sign of loyalty to God and to His laws and a recognition of God's creative and sanctifying power.

4. Work on Sabbath is approved and even required by God when it is a means of relieving suffering. Such work is not an exception to keeping the fourth commandment but fulfilling God's law. The nurse is thus in the privileged position of sharing God's love in a special service.

5. No unnecessary work should be done on Sabbath. Unnecessary is that which could, with careful planning, be done on a day other than the Sabbath with no harm to patients.

6. Those who work on the Sabbath to support individuals providing direct care are also carrying out God's will. These persons include kitchen workers, laboratory workers, and others.

7. Work that is tainted with selfish and self-serving motives is not approved by God. All work for economic gain on Sabbath is wrong in the sight of God.

8. Those who work on the Sabbath run high risks of endangering their Christian experience and experiencing physical, spiritual, and mental fatigue.

9. Celebration of the Sabbath in the way God intended brings joy, peace, and spiritual power.

10. Those in leadership positions in SDA health institutions should promote Sabbath observance and should support workers.

11. SDA health care institutions should be visible in their Sabbath keeping. There should be a distinction between SDA and worldly practice on the Sabbath. These differences should relate in part to the power and healing from God.

12. Tact should be used in working with others in the acts of Sabbath keeping. The true keeper of the Sabbath will seek to promote spiritual growth in others in persuasive and tactful ways.

13. Students in nursing schools should be taught principles of Sabbath observance by both precept and example.

14. True Sabbath keeping is a vital component of spiritual reformation.

15. Before the Sabbath, the Christian nurse should make right any wrongs committed in both the home and work setting.

**Sabbath Keeping for Those Who Must Work on Sabbath:  
A Unit of Instruction for Nursing Students**

"The educators and those being educated in our medical institutions should remember that to keep the Sabbath aright means much to them and to the patrons" (7T 106).

Purposes

1. To examine the meaning of Sabbath observance for members of the health profession.
2. To take an informed stand on Sabbath observance.

Goals

1. To understand the issues involved in true Sabbath observance.
2. To affirm the principles of Sabbath observance from the Bible and from the writings of E.G. White.
3. To apply principles of Sabbath keeping to the work situation.
4. To maintain appropriate Sabbath keeping for the professional life time.
5. To uphold the law and the will of God.
6. To promote Sabbath observance for fellow workers and for the institution.

Objectives

1. To identify the principles of appropriate Sabbath observance from the study of the Bible and the writings of E. G. White.
2. State the circumstances under which God approves of working on the Sabbath.
3. State a set of criteria for decision making on what is necessary and what is unnecessary work on the Sabbath.
4. Create a plan for keeping the Sabbath holy for a given ward and for the individual nurse (or student) on the ward.
5. Determine possible actions and results of actions for a typical practice problem in Sabbath keeping for nurses, using the principles for Sabbath keeping.

6. Write a paper stating a personal commitment to professional and/or personal Sabbath observance giving rationale for the stand.

7. State the risks encountered by persons who must work on Sabbath and ways to decrease these risks.

8. Create a plan for decreasing the spiritual, physical, and mental-social risks of working on the Sabbath.

### Resources

Scripture. (Given here are the scripture data set used for constructing this paper.) Gen. 2:2,3; Ex. 16:23-29, Ex. 20:8-15, Ex. 23:12, Ex. 31:13-17, Ex. 34:21, Ex. 35:2-3, Lev. 19:2,3,30, Lev. 24:5-9, Lev. 23:3, Lev. 26:2-20, Num. 15:32-36, Num. 28:9-10, Deut. 5:12-15, Neh. 10:31, Neh. 13:4-31, Isa. 1:11-20, Isa. 56:1-7, Isa. 58:13, Isa. 66:23, Jer. 17:21-27, Eze. 20:11-26, Eze. 22:8,26, Eze. 44:24, Amos 8:5, Matt. 12:1-9, Matt. 12:10-13, Matt. 24:20, Mark 1:21, Mark 2:23-28, Mark 3:1-6, Mark 6:1-6, Mark 15:42-47,16:1, Luke 4:16, Luke 4:31, Luke 6:1-5, Luke 6:6-11, Luke 13:10-16, Luke 14:1-6, Luke 23:54-56, 24:1, John 5:1-18, John 7:22-29, John 9:1-38, John 19:31,38-42, 20:1, Acts 13:14-15, 42-44, Acts 16:13-15, Acts 17:1-2, Acts 18:1-4, Col. 2:16, Heb. 3:11,15-19, Heb. 4:1-11.

E.G. White. (Given here are readily obtainable and vital passages from E. G. White). DA 281-290, DA 201-207, 4T 247-254, 6T 349-368.

Other Readings. Garrison (1979), Pike (1979). Both of these articles are from Adventist Health Ministry and may be obtained by contacting Health Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20012, USA. See reference list for complete information. Sections of this paper may also be used.

The teacher should assign readings to go along with a given activity assignment.

### Activities

This unit of instruction is to be taught mostly by discussion following reading of assigned passages. Alternately, guest speakers may present topics followed by discussion. At the heart of the instruction, though, is for the student to come to a thoughtful understanding of the principles by his or her own study, thought, and prayer. The teacher may choose to make some of the activity assignments a part of Sabbath experience on the ward. It is suggested that this unit not be assigned a grade if work toward fulfilling requirements is done on the Sabbath day. It is also suggested that in those settings where nursing students

are not ordinarily assigned to clinical experiences on Sabbath, that Sabbath clinical experience be part of this unit of instruction, under careful supervision of the instructor. Thought will need to be given to the practice setting that the best models of Sabbath keeping be used. Better teaching occurs if the students are lead to identify the principles for themselves rather than having a list of principles given to them.

1. Engage in individual or small group study of a portion of scripture or E.G. White writings. Identify principles of appropriate Sabbath observance. (The list of principles given in this paper is intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive.)

2. Observe practice on a given ward, both on Sabbath and on another day. What differences do you observe? Compare the practice you observed on Sabbath with principles of Sabbath keeping defined from your study of the Bible and E.G. White.

3. Interview several SDA nurses working in both SDA and non-SDA health care settings. Determine their attitude toward working on Sabbath. Ask what they do to prepare for the Sabbath at work and in what way their practice of nursing differs on a Sabbath shift. Ask how the nurse reaches a decision on what to do and what to refrain from doing on Sabbath. Also ask what problems the nurse has encountered in Sabbath work, including effect on family and on own spirituality. Compare the results from the nurses working in SDA versus non-SDA settings.

4. Write a message to patients describing Sabbath practices that the patient might observe and have questions about and the reasons for a difference in practice on the Sabbath.

5. Create a strategic plan for a person, a ward, or an institution to promote Sabbath observance.

6. Create a plan for a "safety net" for those who must work on Sabbath. Present this plan to your classmates.

7. Consider each problematic situation assigned by the instructor. Define the principles of Sabbath observance involved and possible solutions. Consider also the probable outcomes of each suggested solution. Make a decision on the best solution and justify your stand.

#### Problem Situations

1. Nurse A has many financial obligations and cannot afford to give up any wages earned from nursing on the Sabbath. What shall this nurse do with money earned on Sabbath?

2. Nurse B accepts employment in a non-SDA hospital. There is no difference in this institution between work on the Sabbath



and that of any other day. The nurse wishes to fully obey God's will in the matter of Sabbath observance. She is afraid that she may be fired if she refuses to do unnecessary work on Sabbath. What should be her course of action?

3. Nurse C is working in a SDA hospital. Sabbath keeping is lax on her ward, even among SDA nurses. She is new to the situation and is looked down on by the other nurses because of her commitment to keeping the Sabbath as she believes God wishes it to be kept. She is viewed as lazy and uncooperative. What shall she do?

4. Nurse D prefers to work on Sabbath because her husband can be home to care for the children on that day. What would be your advise to this nurse?

5. The physicians in this SDA hospital do no unnecessary work on the Sabbath, but the heaviest operating schedule is on Friday, thus causing the nurses to work harder on Sabbath than on any other day. How would you go about solving this problem?

6. This SDA hospital employs both SDA and non-SDA nurses. As many SDA nurses as possible are give off on Sabbath. This results in the wards being short-staffed on Sabbath with less SDA than non-SDA nurses working the Sabbath shifts. The SDA nurses like this arraignment, even if the work is hard on the Sabbath shifts. They would prefer to work hard when they do have to work on Sabbath and have more Sabbaths off. What staffing pattern is most consistent with true Sabbath keeping?

7. Nurse E refuses to work on Sabbath. She has a standing arrangement with fellow non-SDA nurses to trade work days when a Sabbath shift is scheduled. Would you commend Nurse E or not? What advise would you give her? Would your advise be different whether or not she was employed in an SDA versus a non-SDA setting?

8. Nurse F has four children at home. She is a widow. She believes that it is essential for her to be with her children during the Sabbath hours so she requests to have every Sabbath off. You are her supervisor in an SDA hospital. What will be your action on this request?

#### Time Suggestions

This unit of instruction is planned to take from 10-12 hours of class time. Two to four hours should be taken in study of the references and extracting principles of Sabbath observances. The remainder of the hours should be devoted to the suggested activities and problems. It is also suggested that at least four Sabbath clinical shifts be assigned. Papers and projects might be shared with clinical personnel in SDA facilities. An alternate

suggestion is to use this unit for clinical conferences, especially when the student is assigned to a Sabbath shift.

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Key To Abbreviations of E.G. White Book Titles

- CG Child guidance  
 CH Counsels on health  
 DA Desire of ages  
 Ed Education  
 Ev Evangelism  
 EW Early writings  
 GC Great controversy  
 GW Gospel workers  
 LS Life sketches of Ellen G. White  
 ML My life today  
 MM Medical ministry  
 PK Prophets and kings  
 PP Patriarchs and prophets  
 1SG Spiritual gifts vol. 1 (etc for vol. 2,3)  
 1SM Selected Messages vol. 1 (etc for vol. 2,3)  
 1T Testimonies, vol. 1 (etc for vol. 2-9)  
 TM Testimonies to ministers and gospel workers  
 1TT Testimony treasures, vol. 1 (etc for vol 2,3)  
 WM Welfare ministry