

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

First Quarter 2014: *Discipleship*

Lesson 5 “Discipling the Sick”

Read for this week’s study

Isa. 53:4; Matt. 8:17; Mark 2:1–12; Phil. 4:4–9; 1 John 3:20–22; John 11:37–44.

Memory Text

“Large crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel” (Matthew 15:30, 31, NIV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Healing Messiah
- III. Healing the Body
- IV. Healing the Mind and Body
- V. The Resurrection and the Life
- VI. Christ’s Healing Legacy
- VII. Further Study

Questions for Consideration

Moderator: Jerry Winslow

1. Loma Linda University and its health system have adopted the mission “to continue the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ.” Can the miraculous healing ministry of Jesus be perpetuated through the modalities of modern health care?
2. Consider the oft-told story of the paralytic man brought to Jesus by being lowered through the roof of a home in Capernaum (Mark 2:1-12). What lessons about healing the whole person can we learn from the way of Jesus in this story?
3. To what extent does the situation of most patients in today’s health systems present the opportune time for sharing the Adventist understanding of the Gospel? How does your answer relate to what Adventists have long referred to as “health evangelism”?
4. Our lesson for this week reminds us of the fact that “In antiquity, sickness was considered the result of sinful actions.” Even the disciples of Jesus seemed to hold this view (John 9:1-3). Is this kind of belief still common today? If so, what is the

- appropriate theological, ethical, and pastoral response? Does an emphasis on healthful living as a spiritual responsibility heighten the risk that the inevitable disintegration of health will be viewed as a spiritual failure?
5. While the topic of the lesson is discipleship for those who are ill, the obvious goal is wellness. At Loma Linda University, since the 1950s when we adopted the motto “to make man whole,” we have characterized human wellness in terms of the concept of “wholeness.” What does it mean for a person to be “whole”? What biblical concept best coincides with such “wholeness”?
 6. In the past 20 years in our culture, there has been a major resurgence of interest in the relationship between spirituality and personal health. The direction of this interest is almost totally on the health effects of various spiritual practices and (to a lesser extent) beliefs. But there has been almost no interest in the spiritual effects of healthfulness. Why do you think this might be so? From the perspective of Scripture, what is the relationship between caring for one’s physical wellbeing and spiritual health? (see Romans 12:1,2; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20)
 7. Does the continuation of the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus include responsibility for the health of the community and not just the health of its individual members? Most of us who will be participating in this discussion, live in a region that has dismal health statistics, typically placing our county at or near the bottom of all the counties in our state. Should these huge public health challenges be considered within the scope of our health ministry? What if the Good Samaritan went down from Jerusalem to Jericho every week, and every week found injured crime victims needing emergency care? (Luke 10:25-37) And what if that Samaritan did nothing to address the causes of the injuries? Would we still think of him as an exemplar of neighborly love?
 8. Considered together, the Adventist health systems constitute one of the largest faith-inspired health ministries in our nation. We also have over 6000 Adventist congregations in North America. What could we do for the health of the nation, if all those congregations fully accepted the opportunity to be health centers, in partnership with health systems, for the good of our neighbors? What new visions of health ministry could emerge from such a partnership?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Can the Heavenly Physician Be Trusted?

God has presented himself as our heavenly Father and Physician. When Jesus was here, he spent much of his time healing the sick. He had so little time to accomplish his purpose. Why didn’t he spend more of it preaching?

It is apparent from all sixty-six books, that God’s way is not only to explain but to demonstrate. What was Jesus showing about the Father, and about God’s treatment of sinners, by healing all

kinds of people the way he did? Some of them never thanked him. Some of them may even have been among his enemies at the end.

Obviously Jesus had not come to picture God as a destroyer. And God will not change in the end. Those who are lost come face to face with a God who is still their Physician, still just as dedicated to helping people live.

Then why does the Bible picture the lost as perishing? They have not been willing to listen. They have not accepted their medicine. They have not followed the Doctor's prescription. What else, then, could the heavenly Physician do but sadly give them up to the consequence?

But why should they go to a doctor they don't trust? Would you trust a doctor who is reputed to be careless with the truth? Would you risk trusting your life to a physician who is said to become angry with his patients and even threaten them with violence?

Ever since the Adversary lied about God in the Garden of Eden, God has suffered from a forbidding reputation. Even those who present themselves as his friends have often pictured God as arbitrary and severe. The Father understands why so many of his children stay away or go to other healers.

That's why before Jesus went out to Calvary to answer questions about the ultimate consequence of sin, he first lived among us for a while. He wanted us to be assured that the one who finally will have to let some of his children go is an absolutely trustworthy Physician and Friend. {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends*, pp. 124-125. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992} <http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter 9.html>

Let's take Isaiah 53. It's very interesting how it says, among other things, "we esteemed Him smitten of God, and afflicted." Was that correct? When He was hanging on the cross, that confirmed His rejection by the people, because He was obviously being smitten of God and afflicted, in their theology. And they were wrong! They *esteemed* Him smitten of God. You see, that's the theology of Job's four friends. And I have devout church members who say the four friends were right. Just last week I received that information. Some say they were right. I said, through another friend, you mean that when Eliphaz says you're being punished less than you deserve, that Eliphaz was right? "Eliphaz was right."

When Eliphaz listened to that apparition, (you remember, it was just an apparition that appeared), and said "no one can be righteous before God; He doesn't even trust His angels, why would He trust a creature of clay?" That apparition is quoting whom? Who said, "No one can be righteous before God"? Who said, "Job is righteous before me"? And who said he isn't? And who said, "I'll show you that he isn't"? Who said, "I can trust this man"? And who replied, "You don't even trust your angels, how could you trust this creature of clay?"

In my class I quoted from Ellen White, where God had to finally announce that He could no longer trust Satan. And for God to say, "But I trust this creature of clay was deeply offensive to Satan. And Satan says, "I will show you that God has misjudged me, and He's misjudged Job. I'll break him down." And we quote him saying that as a memory verse: "No one can be righteous before God." But God says you *can* be.

Well, "we esteemed Him smitten of God." The four friends, you see, assumed that because Job had lost his health, and he'd lost his wealth, and apparently had lost the blessing of God, that he was being smitten of God and afflicted. Right? Wrong! This was the standard Jewish theology. And so when Jesus was not being rescued by His Father, they said—well, obviously He's sinned! That's why, you remember, they said, "Who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?"; they believed this. And it's believed by Jews to this day.

You may have heard me tell this on tape, that one day we invited the Rabbi from Beverly Hills to speak in chapel at Loma Linda, years ago when Dr. G.T. Anderson was president. And in the morning, he drove to Loma Linda from Beverly Hills, and I happened to be driving from the Los Angeles direction at that hour of the morning. I don't know why, but in my rearview mirror I saw a yellow Thunderbird, the kind with the little portholes on the side; very valuable collector's items now. And in it was a man shuffling papers at the wheel, and then when we got to Loma Linda, (there was no cloverleaf there then), he stopped and turned left toward Barstow, and I went on to chapel, to get it ready for the president. And we had no speaker. But our policy was at noon the speaker would come eat lunch with the president's committee, and he turned up at noon. He was very apologetic he didn't make it to chapel hours before. I said, "Do you by any chance drive a yellow Thunderbird?" "Yes", he said, "I do." "Well," I said, "did you by any chance visit Barstow this morning?" "Yes, I did." He'd taken that left hand turn.

"Well," we said, "can you tell us what you were going to preach about?" "Yes," he said, "I'm willing. When you Christians are prosperous, you seem to feel more and more guilty the richer you become, and you feel you've got to give it all away," like Rockefeller gave 44 million to the University of Chicago in the depths of the depression; that would be a billion now! He said, "Well, we Jews are rich, we thank the Lord for His blessing, because nobody could be rich if the Lord didn't bless him, and the Lord doesn't bless bad people." That still prevails. And when Jesus said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be saved; it puzzled them because you couldn't be rich unless you were blessed, and you couldn't be blessed unless you were good!

When He said to the rich young ruler, "Give all that you have to the poor and come follow me," He wasn't testing his unselfishness, He was saying to the young man, give up all the evidence you're a good person. If you give up your wealth, the community will think you're a sinner and a heretic like me. And so when Jesus stood up at the Sermon on the Mount and said "blessed are the poor," that was heresy. Blessed are the poor? No, cursed were the poor. And that's

because they were bad. So wealth was a sign of God's blessing, health was a sign of God's blessing, because you were a good person, you see. So when Jesus came to the cross and no one rescued Him, and He was afflicted, they esteemed Him smitten of God; and they were wrong. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Atonement and Your Picture of God, recorded May, 1993, San Diego, California.} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMAANDP> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMAANDP> (Part 2) (Approximately 30:30)

And then when I read this, not too long ago, "The only way in which God could set men right and keep men right was to make Himself visible and familiar to their eyes. So Christ exalted the character of God. **The whole purpose of His mission on earth was to set men right through the revelation of God.** So in Christ was arrayed before men the paternal grace and the matchless perfection of the Father. In His prayer just before His crucifixion He declared, "I have manifested Thy name, I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." What work? What would it suggest our work to be? **"When the object of His mission was obtained, that is, the revelation of God to the world, the Son of God announced to the world that His work was accomplished, and that the character of the Father was made manifest to men."**

I have good friends I have great affection for; I have people even closer than that, who deplore the emphasis on the character of God. And no one is in a position to judge. Paul would say "Don't you dare judge anybody. Let everybody be fully persuaded in his own mind." **They are preoccupied with what God has done for you and me.** And that is a magnificent thing to be sure. But there is a larger view. What God has done for His entire family. And our future depends on His winning that. And He already won it. But we need to include that. That's the evidence that wins us back to faith and trust. What confirms the faith of the loyal is what wins us back to faith. And once we have faith, it's no problem for God to save. **God can and will save all who trust Him.** {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Larger View, part 1, recorded October, 1982, Monterey, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/1MMLVIEW> (Approximately 4:00)*

What really is consequential is that the Creator of the whole universe stood there at the funeral of one of His friends, and the Bible says he cried. And He's the One who fed people when they were hungry, and He loved healing people. When Jairus' daughter was hungry, He said at her resurrection, "Somebody get this little girl something to eat." I think those are all very consequential revelations of the kind of Person God is. Do you remember the blind man? The disciples said, "Who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?" What a picture they had of God! And Jesus said, "That's not why he's blind, but this is an opportunity for God to be glorified." And He healed him.

The disciples needed a good deal of theological correction, didn't they? But He worked with them. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 - John, recorded April, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/57MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/58MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

You think how gently Jesus presented the good news. And most folk thought anyone that weak couldn't have much authority. But others said, "However, it does seem to be the truth." And I think that is the way we should come across.

And that would also help us not to be so preoccupied with our own image, even as a church. I wish we kept a lower profile, maybe, and we would lead people to be much more preoccupied with the message we have to give. But sometimes we think until our profile is high enough, and good enough, we can't even give the gospel. Well, it's true, we ought to be good representatives, but I think the emphasis is wrong. I think we ought to say, "Let God be true, though every one of us be false," as Paul said in Romans, and then we wouldn't have to be so defensive about ourselves. The Good News isn't about us anyway. The Good News is about God.

We may not have seen anything yet! It may get worse. And the only way to survive is to concentrate on the real gospel which is about Him. It's like, we've all found the best Doctor in the universe. And we're all very sick. That's why we're going to Him. So don't look at us. We're making some headway, that's true, but look at our Doctor, is the thing, you see. We don't say, "Look at all us patients." They might say, "Well, you are a sick bunch." Well, you ought to come see our doctor. There should be some healing taking place, maybe, as evidence that our Doctor is a skillful doctor. Yes, there should be some healing. But we don't all have to be perfectly well. We have to be patients making some progress, that's true. But if every once in awhile we show how sick we are, we could turn that around into a compliment for our Doctor. Our Doctor is so good; He has had some very sick people come for help. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 - Philippians, 1& 2 Thessalonians, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:* <http://pkp.cc/69MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/70MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Take the law now. And contrast the work of a physician and his help for a sick person and perhaps the approach we might have toward a health program that's being presented. And you realize that if we were really healthy we could do a hundred push-ups, we could jog several miles. We'd never grow weary. We wouldn't need glasses. We wouldn't need hearing aids. And you read about how a healthy person behaves. And it's inspiring when you look at it. Look how we admire athletes when we see them. But we realize we're not like that. If God said, "Up, out of bed. Jog five miles the first day. I'm expecting; throw your glasses away." It doesn't work that

way, does it? God does not come demanding perfect health of us, or perfect spirituality of us. It would be very depressing, very discouraging. The law is like that. It's like expecting people to be ideally healthy, immediately. Is there anything wrong with being healthy and having perfect eyesight and perfect hearing and being able to run five miles without getting tired? Wonderful! The law does not require anything we wouldn't like to do. But we're weak, and we stumble at best. And God says, "I'm not coming to you that way. I'm coming as a physician. And I know some of you are very weak; in fact some of you will never get out of bed again. You're going to die of this illness. But I want you to die trusting me, and the healing will take place in the resurrection."

You know, even our health education, if we abuse it, can be very discouraging. Do we only have a health message for people who can get out and jog around the track down here? There are folk in the hospital who are never going to get out of bed again. Have we no healing for them? Is it possible in the most important way to die healed? If a person dies trusting God, he'll rise in the resurrection fit as a fiddle, won't he? And that's the message we have to bring. Now that doesn't mean if life shall last we won't do the best we can with what we have, though even then we'll get older.

I remember watching a gentleman when I first came to Loma Linda walking the streets here with such vigor. It was marvelous to watch, and every year he'd walk a little slower, and a little slower, and one day I missed him. And I asked, and he was old; he had died. He walked slower rather than faster, and finally he died. Had the health message done nothing for him? No, he died. It had been very good for him. But we do get old. We're in an emergency situation. This is why Christ did spend most of his time healing the sick. And it is there that we can bear our greatest testimony. A message of health to be sure. It's like the Ten Commandments; that's the ideal. Let's aspire toward it. Wouldn't we like to love and be trustworthy, and stop all the killing and the stealing and the immorality? Yes, be perfect in fact. But God comes to us where we are. And some of us are weak, and in this life never will be very strong. The thief on the cross died soon after he got the message, but he died essentially healed; he will arise essentially healed, trusting God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Galatians, Part 3, recorded February, 1978} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/3MMGALATIANS66>

Imagine what Satan would look like if he chose to come in full majesty and power, performing miracles. The Bible warns us that he will. Would we believe him? Because of who he is? Because of his power, his authority? His miracles? Do you remember the warning in Scripture, if someone gives a sign or a wonder, Deuteronomy 13, and the sign or wonder comes to pass, and at the same time the individual does not tell the truth, do not believe him. Remember 1 Kings 13, the older prophet, who said, "I am a prophet of the Lord, and the angel of the Lord has told me thus and so," next line, "but he lied to him." The Bible warns us not to accept the word of

anybody. To be reverent and respectful, as is appropriate, but we cannot believe because of the authority of the person. The ultimate authority is the truth. And yet look at Paul saying, "If an angel disagrees with me, he's wrong!" How can we put the two together? There's a beautiful tension here, right in this epistle. It's supposed to, I think, stimulate our minds immensely as we read it. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 - Galatians, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/65MMPOGIA66>*

Long ago Moses had warned the children of Israel not to be misled by the working of miracles. "A prophet or an interpreter of dreams may promise a miracle or a wonder, in order to lead you to worship and serve gods that you have not worshiped before. Even if what he promises comes true, do not pay any attention to him." (Deuteronomy 13:1-3, GNB)

In the Old Testament, the story is told of a prophet from Judah who was sent by God to deliver a message to King Jeroboam. Upon completion of his mission, he was to refuse any offer of hospitality and return home by another way.

This "man of God" was a faithful servant of the Lord and accustomed to obeying without question the voice of authority. "God said it! I believe it! That settles it!" was his humble but vulnerable way of determining truth.

The prophet delivered his message. And when the king invited him to stay and eat, there was no hesitation in the reply. " 'Even if you gave me half of your wealth, I would not go with you or eat or drink anything with you. The Lord has commanded me not to eat or drink a thing, and not to return home the same way I came.' " (1 King 13:8, 9 GNB)

The sons of an old prophet, who lived nearby, told their father about the messenger from Judah and what he had said to the king.

"Which way did he go?" the old man asked.

They showed him the road. "Saddle my donkey," he ordered his sons, then set out to follow the obedient younger man. He found him sitting under an oak tree on the way.

"Are you the prophet from Judah?" the old man asked.

"I am."

"Then come home and have a meal with me."

"I can't. God has strictly forbidden me to stop and eat with anyone on this trip. And when God says what to do, that settles it for me."

"No problem," said the older man. " 'I, too, am a prophet just like you, and at the Lord's command an angel told me to take you home with me and offer you my hospitality.' But the old prophet was lying." (1 Kings 13:18 GNB)

“You mean God has changed his mind? Well, as I always say, ‘If God said it, I believe it.’ ”
Thoroughly deceived, the trusting man from Judah went home with the older prophet.

The story has a sad ending and one might fairly ask, “Why is this story included in the Bible at all?” The younger prophet had no reason to suspect that the old man was lying. It would have been rude to suggest it. But he also had no reason to accept without question the contradiction of God’s previous command. If only he had politely reserved his right to further investigate.

How often in these modern times we hear the claims of religious teachers that God, by his angels or his Spirit, has told them this or that. It would be rude to deny it. Besides, God has often spoken in this way. But God has also advised us to beware. *Prophets, too, can lie.*

{Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends*, pp. 63-66. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992} <http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter5.html>

Further Study with Ellen White

To take people right where they are, whatever their position, whatever their condition, and help them in every way possible—this is gospel ministry.... Those who are sick in body are nearly always sick in soul, and when the soul is sick, the body is made sick.—MS. 62, 1900. {MM 238.1}

The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and physical restoration. Deliverance from sin and the healing of disease were linked together. {CT 465.2}

The divine commission needs no reform. Christ’s way of presenting truth cannot be improved upon. The Saviour gave the disciples practical lessons, teaching them how to work in such a way as to make souls glad in the truth. He sympathized with the weary, the heavy-laden, the oppressed. He fed the hungry and healed the sick. Constantly He went about doing good. By the good He accomplished, by His loving words and kindly deeds, He interpreted the gospel to men. {CH 498.2}

Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, “Follow Me.” {MH 143.3}

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man’s necessity. He “took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses,” that He might minister to every need of humanity. Matthew 8:17. The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character. {MH 17.1}

Varied were the circumstances and needs of those who besought His aid, and none who came to Him went away unhelped. From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole. {MH 17.2}

Christ stood at the head of humanity in the garb of humanity. So full of sympathy and love was His attitude that the poorest was not afraid to come to Him. He was kind to all, easily approached by the most lowly. He went from house to house, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the distressed. . . . He was willing to humble Himself, to deny Himself. He did not seek to distinguish Himself. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to be a comfort and a consolation to others, to gladden the sad and heavy-laden one with whom He daily came in contact. {WM 53.2}

Christ stands before us as a pattern Man, the great Medical Missionary—an example for all who should come after. His love, pure and holy, blessed all who came within the sphere of its influence. His character was absolutely perfect, free from the slightest stain of sin. He came as an expression of the perfect love of God, not to crush, not to judge and condemn, but to heal every weak, defective character, to save men and women from Satan's power. He is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the human race. He gives to all the invitation, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." {WM 53.3}

Jesus came to "destroy the works of the devil." "In Him was life," and He says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He is "a quickening spirit." 1 John 3:8; John 1:4; 10:10; 1 Corinthians 15:45. And He still has the same life-giving power as when on earth He healed the sick, and spoke forgiveness to the sinner. He "forgiveth all thine iniquities," He "healeth all thy diseases." Psalm 103:3. {DA 270.2}

The Saviour in His miracles revealed the power that is continually at work in man's behalf, to sustain and to heal him. Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him. {MH 112.1}