

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2014: *Discipleship*
Lesson 9 “Discipling *the Powerful*”

Read for this week’s study

Rom. 13:1–7, Mark 2:23–28, Matt. 8:5–13, 26:57–68, 27:11–14, Acts 4:1–12.

Memory Text

“The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7, NRSV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Respecting Authority
- III. “Have You Not Read . . . ?”
- IV. The Centurion
- V. Judgment Day
- VI. The Early Explosion
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Daniel Duda

1. “Over the long centuries, people have struggled to understand the role and function of government and how citizens should relate to it. What gives rulers the right to rule? What is the best form of government? Should people always obey their government? If not, why not? These are just a few of a host of questions that we still wrestle with to this day.”(Sunday’s lesson)
2. Where do power structures come from? Why are they important? Why is it tempting to abuse power? What provisions must be in place to prevent the abuse? Why is this especially relevant in a religious environment?
3. “What important message is in Romans 13:1–7 for us? How, though, can these texts and the message they teach be abused? What examples do we have in history of that happening? How can we as a church learn from these mistakes, even in our own history, as well as from the mistakes of the Christian church in general?” (Sunday’s lesson)
4. “Unfortunately, some of the most powerful and influential people with whom Jesus dealt were the religious leaders of His time, many of whom were openly hostile to

- Him.” (Monday’s lesson) Why were the religious leaders so hostile towards Jesus? What were they afraid of? How did the behavior of Jesus threaten them and their authority?
5. “In dealing with these people, Jesus referred to the Scriptures and even sacred history, sources that should have touched the religious leaders. Jesus was appealing to what should have been common ground between them. For instance, He quoted the Bible when He talked about the importance of mercy over ritual. By so doing He sought to bring the leaders to a deeper meaning of the law that they claimed to so fervently and devoutly cherish and uphold.”(Monday’s lesson) Why is it that “arguments” (even sound Biblical ones!) often fail to convince people?
 6. It is important to note that Jesus here is not saying that the Sabbath was a bad idea, or that God had changed His mind about it. But He was attacking the way it had become such a powerful system that the people who were agitating for its strict observance, had forgotten whose law it was and what it was supposed to be all about. It was there to ensure that God’s love for His people would not be misunderstood. But if their application of God’s law was getting in the way of reaching and healing people in desperate need, then there was something wrong with such an interpretation or application. People matter more than things, Jesus shows. Besides the Sabbath, what else was similarly abused or misinterpreted throughout the history of Christianity and within Adventism?
 7. Jesus refers to himself as ‘Son of man’ – as one who is carrying God’s authority (see Daniel 7:13). And it ties what He is doing here with the wider story of God.
 8. By referring to King David, who was already anointed but not enthroned, Jesus shows that He is the true king, anointed, but not yet enthroned (Matthew traces his story from his ‘anointing’ at his baptism to his ‘enthronement’ on the cross). But He also shows that what He does is more important than the temple itself, not just because people matter more than things, but because Jesus matters more than Solomon’s temple and all that was connected with it. No wonder His response caused such an angry reaction from Pharisees, the self-appointed guardians of tradition!
 9. What systems are currently in danger of being exalted over the needs of real human beings in your family, in your church, in your country? What should our response be? How do these people need to be ‘disciplined’?
 10. “Anyone can enjoy the centurion’s experience. This story should encourage those evangelizing among people in powerful positions. How many twenty-first century centurions are there? May their faith inspire and strengthen ours.” (Tuesday’s lesson) The lesson uses this story as an encouragement to evangelize powerful people in high positions. However, what role does the story play in Matthew chapter 8? Why do you think Matthew put the story there?
 11. Matthew told us at the end of the previous chapter that the crowds were astonished because when Jesus taught, He taught as one with authority. Therefore, Matthew’s

next section (chapters 8 & 9) will show us what Jesus' authority looked like in practice. And he starts with two stories about a leper and the centurion's servant. Both are stories of healing, but Matthew's point goes beyond that. With the leper, Jesus is restoring and renewing a member of Israel. With the centurion, faith in Jesus' authority is already spreading to people outside of Israel, as a sign of the great "gathering-in" of all the nations that God intends to accomplish. These two stories are a window into understanding the whole gospel. The challenge for us is to ask: "What does it mean to recognize and to submit to the authority of Jesus himself? What does it mean to call him 'Lord' and live by it?"

12. "We need to ask ourselves if we have become complacent and are merely espousing correct doctrines instead of experiencing living faith? Have newer, lesser-equipped believers nevertheless expressed deeper faith than those raised within Christianity? Have our spiritual advantages become occasions for self-dependency? Have spiritual opportunities escaped unnoticed?" (Tuesday's lesson)
13. What can we learn from Jesus' witness to powerful people like Herod, Pilate, and the high priests? (See Matthew 26:57–68; 27:11–14; Luke 23:1–12; John 18:19–23, 31–40; 19:8–12 quoted in Wednesday's lesson.) What about Paul's witness to Felix, Festus, King Agrippa, Bernice, Drusilla? (See Thursday's lesson.)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

In this brief emergency period we have been asked to bear witness to a certain essential truth, and it takes all the time and energy that we have. There are many wrongs that need to be righted. Ellen White commented, for example, on the good work done by the Salvation Army. And she says, "I think our position should be God bless the Salvation Army, and let us get on with our work."

Sometimes we want to get in there and compete with the Salvation Army. No, let's support them and bless them. Do you think we ought to compete with the American Bible Society and the International Bible Societies? Tens of millions of copies of the Bible in a thousand languages around the world. Why, this could completely absorb the attention of our publishing houses, even with all the web presses they're getting these days. No, our view is God bless the Bible Societies and let's double our offering next year.

We have something to do that requires our complete focus. In the *Commentary* 20 years ago I tried this:

Paul does not imply in these verses that God always approves the conduct of civil governments. Nor does Paul mean that it is the Christian's duty always to submit to them. The requirements of government may at times be contrary to the law of God, and under such circumstances the Christian is "to obey God rather than men."

Remember in Acts:

Paul's point is that the ruling power of human governments is entrusted to men by God, according to His own purposes for man's welfare. Their continuance in power, or their fall from authority, is in His hands. Therefore, the Christian will support the authority of the existing state. He will not presume to take it into his own hands to resist or to depose 'the powers that be.'

Such instruction was especially needful in Paul's day, for at that time the Jews were in a turbulent mood and had already stirred up rebellion in various parts of the Roman Empire. For Christians to reveal a similarly un-submissive spirit would have been to incur the same displeasure that was beginning to fall upon the Jews. It would also have resulted in their forfeiting the protection of the Roman state, which had often been a blessing to the early Christians, as Paul could testify from his own experience, [couldn't he?] Furthermore, it would have brought reproach upon the Christian church and its message of peace and brotherly love. Therefore, Paul elsewhere urges believers to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy) and to obey them (Titus). Likewise Peter commands Christians to submit "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (1 Peter 2).

Isn't this practical advice under the circumstances? There'll be times, though, when one might have to say at risk of life, "I can't do this" but isn't it a desire to avoid unnecessary trouble for we have a work to do. These other matters can be settled at some other time. But at the same time if someone has a great burden to do something I think we should be very careful how we pass judgment on that individual. But I have a quotation that says there are a thousand and one topics, good topics, to distract our attention and we need to focus on the one main work we have to do. And maybe we've tried to do too many things as a Church, too.

We're trying to right more and more wrongs. There's no way that we can do it all, but everything depends on people coming to a right relationship with God by seeing Him as He really is. That's first and foremost. We would do well to do that if nothing else. Then would we not practice the healing arts? Well, is there any clearer way to represent the truth about God, and so forth? So we say yes, we'll go on practicing the healing arts. How about all the other things we do? I've looked forward to the day when our church might convene a great conference in which we would review our essential, unique, distinctive mission and then we would measure every department and every program in our growing church and ask to what extent does this contribute importantly to fulfilling this distinctive mission? And if it should be found that Loma Linda does not contribute, we'd better close it down. I mean, we can't afford luxuries like this, unless it's really contributing.

How about all our other programs? Our temperance work? How about our large educational system, could we maybe handle this in some less expensive way? Only if we can say this really does contribute are we justified in continuing, for this is an emergency period where work is supposed to be finished in a short space of time if we would concentrate on it. I think it's in that

mood that Paul is saying, "I'm not saying that society is right, on the contrary, there's much that's wrong." And he suffered from government, didn't he? But he said let's not fall out with government, let's not inspire revolt, let's concentrate on the good news. He was beheaded by the government, wasn't he, in due course of time as far as that's concerned. Peter was crucified upside down by the Roman government. The government that often protected Christians at times was very cruel to Christians. There were times of persecution.

I think the idea is to be at peace "as much as is in you," remember last time? "As much as in you is," as much as it's up to you, "be at peace with all men." And these precious times of peace give us the chance to do our work. Would this be true in our own church even? Well, there's a very interesting comment on this. In [Testimonies] Volume 1, page 204 is this piece of advice:

Angels of God are commissioned to have oversight of the work; [referring to the work of the Adventist Church] and if it does not move right, those who are at the head of the work will be corrected, and things will move in God's order without the interference of this or that individual.

That says don't start a revolution in the church either, to throw out the general brethren or something. That's not our business.

"If the work does not move right, those who are at the head of the work will be corrected, and things will move in God's order without the interference of this or that individual."

Of course, if in Dallas you're appointed to the nominating committee then you have a delegated responsibility to cast your vote. But we have other things to do. If things are moving relatively well it would be best if each of us would get on with our task, it would seem to me. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 13, recorded January, 1977, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:* <http://pkp.cc/25MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/26MMROMANS66> (Part 2)

And God demonstrated to the family, "I do not want you to serve Me from fear, because if you do, you'll not be My friends. You will be my pious, pretentiously pious enemies. And when My Son comes the second time, you'll hate Him as those pious Sabbath-keepers hated Him nineteen hundred years ago." Now why do we Adventists obey? Is it clear to us there's not a streak of arbitrariness in our God? And of all the commandments, the least arbitrary to me is the Seventh-day Sabbath, and I wince if it's ever described as a mere arbitrary test of obedience. It could leave us vulnerable, just as the Jews were back in these ancient times.

Well, you might like to review this as you read John. It's clearer than anywhere in John, but if we don't reach satisfaction in John, Romans will discuss it, and Galatians will discuss it, and Hebrews will discuss it, and we'll have many other opportunities. Just as we go, could I read this from Ellen White? Look at Jesus' behavior, just so we can end with something inspired:

Jesus stood before Pilate, and Pilate looked at the men who had Jesus in charge, and then his gaze rested searchingly on Jesus. He had had to deal with all kinds of criminals; but never before had a man bearing marks of such goodness and nobility been brought before him. On His face he saw no sign of guilt, no expression of fear, no boldness or defiance either. He saw instead a man of calm and dignified bearing, whose countenance bore not the marks of a criminal, but the signature of heaven. Satan led the cruel mob in its abuse of the Saviour. It was his purpose to provoke Him to retaliation if possible, or to drive Him to perform a miracle to release Himself, and thus break up the plan of salvation.

Next time maybe we should discuss how performing a miracle would have broken up the plan. How would it?

But He who by a command could bring the heavenly host to His aid; He who could have driven that mob in terror from His sight by the flashing forth of His divine majesty, submitted with perfect calmness to the coarsest insult and outrage. Satan's rage was great as he saw that all the abuse inflicted upon the Saviour had not forced the least murmur from His lips. Every feature expressed gentleness and resignation and tenderest pity for His cruel foes. But in His manner there was no cowardly weakness, but the strength and dignity of long-suffering. In the thick darkness, [right at the end] God veiled the last human agony of His Son. All who had seen Christ in His suffering had been convicted of His divinity. [Without a miracle, see? The real evidence, the way He behaved.] That face, once beheld by humanity, was never forgotten. As the face of Cain expressed his guilt as a murderer, so the face of Christ revealed innocence, serenity, benevolence; the image of God.

But as you know, as He hung on the cross, He was tempted to doubt His Father. The very thing we've been discussing. Because being in that condition all the evidence seemed to be to the contrary, and all the people around Him would say, "You couldn't be the Son of God! You couldn't be a saint! Look at the condition you're in. Remember Job? You must be a sinner, accursed and hanging on the tree." And remember, "Cursed is the one who hangs on the tree." They were very clear. You had to be a sinner. And He was tempted to doubt what He'd been saying about His Father. "Satan, with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb." See, He'd limited Himself as a human. "Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God, that their separation was to be eternal."

As He experienced this separation from His Father, "so great was this agony, that His physical pain was hardly felt. With amazement angels witnessed the Saviour's despairing agony." Note

the words, agony, fear, consternation. He was really tempted to doubt all that He had been teaching. He even wondered if He would rise again.

Maybe He was tempted to believe this legal explanation—you know, the second death is “you die and stay dead forever.” And if He was going to pay the price for sin, He would have to die, and stay dead forever. He would never rise again. But He didn’t come to pay that penalty. He came to answer the questions. And as soon as He had answered them—but He did wait over Sabbath, to add more meanings to the Sabbath, so that every Sabbath we’d remember the questions He had answered on Friday. And then He arose “a great while before it was day”, and He hastened to heaven. And He said to Mary, “Don’t detain Me! I have to hasten to Heaven.” And He appeared before His Father, and the angels, and He said, “Was it enough?” To pay the price of sin? “No,” they could have said, “You’re supposed to stay dead for eternity. You hurry back! We’ll not let anybody know You were out.” They never said such a thing! They said, “It is more than enough. You’ve cleared up all our questions. You’ve confirmed our trust without fear for eternity.” And He came back down to see if the twelve had got the message, and they were all in a deep depression. It took Him a long time to revive them.

And to this present day, do we really accept what He came to reveal at such infinite cost, that He does not wish to be served from fear? The Father will no more kill us at the end of the millennium than He killed His Son. Which leads some to believe that He did kill His Son as He will kill the wicked at the end. How have you worked this out yourself? Well, how did Jesus resolve these questions on the cross?

Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance heretofore given Him. [Why?] He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. [And His faith was based on evidence.] And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father’s favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.

He did not die in despair. He had already made the point. And He died convinced that all would be well. He died trusting His Father, because of the evidence. And surely that is an example to us. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 - Luke*, recorded April, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/55MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/56MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

While the truth must be defended, this work is to be done in the spirit of Jesus. If God's people work without peace and love, they work at a great loss, an irretrievable loss. Souls are driven from Christ even after they have been connected with His work. {Ev 173.2}

We are not to pass judgment on those who have not had the opportunities and privileges we have had. Some of these will go into heaven before those who have had great light but have not lived up to the light. {Ev 173.3}

If we wish to convince unbelievers that we have the truth that sanctifies the soul and transforms the character, we must not vehemently charge them with their errors. Thus we force them to the conclusion that the truth does not make us kind and courteous, but coarse and rough. {Ev 173.4}

Do all in your power to reflect the light, but do not speak words that will irritate or provoke.—*Manuscript 117a*, 1901. {Ev 173.7}

Let every minister learn to wear the gospel shoes. He who is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace will walk as Christ walked. He will be able to speak right words, and to speak them in love. He will not try to drive home God's message of truth. He will deal tenderly with every heart, realizing that the Spirit will impress the truth on those who are susceptible to divine impressions. Never will he be vehement in his manner. Every word spoken will have a softening, subduing influence. . . . {Ev 174.1}

All whose hearts are in sympathy with the heart of Infinite Love will seek to reclaim, and not to condemn. Christ dwelling in the soul is a spring that never runs dry. Where He abides, there will be an overflowing of beneficence.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 39. (1896)
{Ev 174.3}

We are to be one with Christ as He is one with the Father, and the Father will love us as He loves His Son. We may have the same help that Christ had, we may have strength for every emergency; for God will be our front guard and our rearward. He will shut us in on every side, and when we are brought before rulers, before the authorities of the earth, we need not meditate beforehand of what we shall say. God will teach us in the day of our need. Now may God help us to come to the feet of Jesus and learn of Him, before we seek to become teachers of others.—*Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890. {TM 386.2}

We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God's word must be recognized as above all human legislation. A "Thus saith the Lord" is not to be set aside for a "Thus saith the

church” or a “Thus saith the state.” The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates. {AA 68.2}

We are not required to defy authorities. Our words, whether spoken or written, should be carefully considered, lest we place ourselves on record as uttering that which would make us appear antagonistic to law and order. We are not to say or do anything that would unnecessarily close up our way. We are to go forward in Christ’s name, advocating the truths committed to us. If we are forbidden by men to do this work, then we may say, as did the apostles, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” {AA 69.1}

In the tenth chapter of Acts we have still another instance of the ministration of heavenly angels, resulting in the conversion of Cornelius and his company. Let these chapters [8-10] be read, and receive special attention. In them we see that heaven is much nearer to the Christian who is engaged in the work of soulsaving than many suppose. We should learn through them also the lesson of God’s regard for every human being, and that each should treat his fellow man as one of the Lord’s instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His work in the earth (MS 17, 1908). {6BC 1059.2}

The Saviour had not come to set aside what patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for He Himself had spoken through these representative men. All the truths of God’s word came from Him. But these priceless gems had been placed in false settings. Their precious light had been made to minister to error. God desired them to be removed from their settings of error and replaced in the framework of truth. This work only a divine hand could accomplish. By its connection with error, the truth had been serving the cause of the enemy of God and man. Christ had come to place it where it would glorify God, and work the salvation of humanity. {DA 287.4}

Christ preached the gospel to the poor, but He did not confine His labors to this class. He worked for all who would hear His word—not only the publican and the outcasts, but the rich and cultivated Pharisee, the Jewish nobleman, the centurion, and the Roman ruler. This is the kind of work I have ever seen should be done. We are not to strain every spiritual sinew and nerve to work for the lowest classes, and make that work the all in all. There are others whom we must bring to the Master, souls who need the truth, who are bearing responsibilities, and who will work with all their sanctified ability for the high places as well as for the low places. {WM 257.2}

The Saviour longed to unfold to His disciples the truth regarding the breaking down of the “middle wall of partition” between Israel and the other nations—the truth that “the Gentiles should be fellow heirs” with the Jews and “partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel.” Ephesians 2:14; 3:6. This truth was revealed in part at the time when He rewarded the faith of the centurion at Capernaum, and also when He preached the gospel to the inhabitants of

Sychar. Still more plainly was it revealed on the occasion of His visit to Phoenicia, when He healed the daughter of the Canaanite woman. These experiences helped the disciples to understand that among those whom many regarded as unworthy of salvation, there were souls hungering for the light of truth. {AA 19.3}

Thus Christ sought to teach the disciples the truth that in God's kingdom there are no territorial lines, no caste, no aristocracy; that they must go to all nations, bearing to them the message of a Saviour's love. . . .{AA 20.1}

Patently Jesus listened to the conflicting testimonies. No word did He utter in self-defense. At last His accusers were entangled, confused, and maddened. The trial was making no headway; it seemed that their plottings were to fail. Caiaphas was desperate. One last resort remained; Christ must be forced to condemn Himself. The high priest started from the judgment seat, his face contorted with passion, his voice and demeanor plainly indicating that were it in his power he would strike down the prisoner before him. "Answerest Thou nothing?" he exclaimed; "what is it which these witness against Thee?" {DA 706.1}

Jesus held His peace. "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." Isaiah 53:7. {DA 706.2}

At last, Caiaphas, raising his right hand toward heaven, addressed Jesus in the form of a solemn oath: "I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God." {DA 706.3}

To this appeal Christ could not remain silent. There was a time to be silent, and a time to speak. He had not spoken until directly questioned. He knew that to answer now would make His death certain. But the appeal was made by the highest acknowledged authority of the nation, and in the name of the Most High. Christ would not fail to show proper respect for the law. More than this, His own relation to the Father was called in question. He must plainly declare His character and mission. Jesus had said to His disciples, "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." Matthew 10:32. Now by His own example He repeated the lesson. {DA 706.4}

Jesus had many sympathizers in the company about Him, and His answering nothing to the many questions put to Him amazed the throng. Under all the mockery and violence of the mob, not a frown, not a troubled expression, rested upon His features. He was dignified and composed. The spectators looked upon Him with wonder. They compared His perfect form and firm, dignified bearing with the appearance of those who sat in judgment against Him, and said to one another that He appeared more like a king than any of the rulers. He bore no marks of being a criminal. His eye was mild, clear, and undaunted, His forehead broad and high. Every feature was strongly marked with benevolence and noble principle. His patience and

forbearance were so unlike man that many trembled. Even Herod and Pilate were greatly troubled at His noble, Godlike bearing. {EW 172.2}

From the first, Pilate was convicted that Jesus was no common man. He believed Him to be an excellent character, and entirely innocent of the charges brought against Him. The angels who were witnessing the scene marked the convictions of the Roman governor, and to save him from engaging in the awful act of delivering Christ to be crucified, an angel was sent to Pilate's wife, and gave her information through a dream that it was the Son of God in whose trial her husband was engaged, and that He was an innocent sufferer. She immediately sent a message to Pilate, stating that she had suffered many things in a dream on account of Jesus and warning him to have nothing to do with that holy man. The messenger, pressing hastily through the crowd, placed the letter in the hands of Pilate. As he read, he trembled and turned pale, and at once determined to have nothing to do with putting Christ to death. If the Jews would have the blood of Jesus, he would not give his influence to it, but would labor to deliver Him. {EW 173.1}

When Pilate heard that Herod was in Jerusalem, he was greatly relieved; for he hoped to free himself from all responsibility in the trial and condemnation of Jesus. He at once sent Him, with His accusers, to Herod. This ruler had become hardened in sin. The murder of John the Baptist had left upon his conscience a stain from which he could not free himself. When he heard of Jesus and the mighty works wrought by Him, he feared and trembled, believing Him to be John the Baptist risen from the dead. When Jesus was placed in his hands by Pilate, Herod considered the act an acknowledgment of his power, authority, and judgment. This had the effect to make friends of the two rulers, who had before been enemies. Herod was pleased to see Jesus, expecting Him to work some mighty miracle for his satisfaction. But it was not the work of Jesus to gratify curiosity or to seek His own safety. His divine, miraculous power was to be exercised for the salvation of others, but not in His own behalf. {EW 173.2}

Jesus answered nothing to the many questions put to Him by Herod; neither did He reply to His enemies, who were vehemently accusing Him. Herod was enraged because Jesus did not appear to fear his power, and with his men of war he derided, mocked, and abused the Son of God. Yet he was astonished at the noble, Godlike appearance of Jesus when shamefully abused, and fearing to condemn Him, he sent Him again to Pilate. {EW 174.1}

Satan and his angels were tempting Pilate and trying to lead him on to his own ruin. They suggested to him that if he did not take part in condemning Jesus others would; the multitude were thirsting for His blood; and if he did not deliver Him to be crucified, he would lose his power and worldly honor and would be denounced as a believer on the impostor. Through fear of losing his power and authority, Pilate consented to the death of Jesus. And notwithstanding he placed the blood of Jesus upon His accusers, and the multitude received it, crying, "His blood be on us, and on our children," yet Pilate was not clear; he was guilty of the blood of Christ. For his own selfish interest, his love of honor from the great men of earth, he delivered an innocent

man to die. If Pilate had followed his own convictions, he would have had nothing to do with condemning Jesus. {EW 174.2}

The appearance and words of Jesus during His trial made a deep impression upon the minds of many who were present on that occasion. The result of the influence thus exerted was apparent after His resurrection. Among those who were then added to the church, there were many whose conviction dated from the time of Jesus' trial. {EW 174.3}

Satan's rage was great as he saw that all the cruelty which he had led the Jews to inflict on Jesus had not called forth from Him the slightest murmur. Although He had taken upon Himself man's nature, He was sustained by a Godlike fortitude, and departed not in the least from the will of His Father. {EW 175.1}

The highest evidence of nobility in a Christian is self-control. We should copy the example of Jesus, for when He was reviled, He reviled not again, but "committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." Our Redeemer met insult and mockery with uncomplaining silence. All the cruel taunts of the murderous throng who exulted in His humiliation and trial in the judgment hall could not bring from Him one look or word of resentment or impatience. He was the Majesty of heaven, and in His pure breast there dwelt no room for the spirit of retaliation, but only for pity and love. {TMK 139.2}