

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2014: *Discipleship*
Lesson 11 “Discipling Spiritual Leaders”

Read for this week’s study

Luke 6:12–16, John 16:7–14, Luke 6:20–49, Jer. 50:31, Isa. 57:15, Acts 1.

Memory Text

“Now it came to pass in those days that those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles” (Luke 6:12, 13, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Leadership Starts Here
- III. Knowledge and Experience, Part 1
- IV. Knowledge and Experience, Part 2
- V. The Early Leaders
- VI. What Jesus Left
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Daniel Duda

1. “The disciples’ preparation for leadership certainly involved the receiving of knowledge, but spiritual growth was uppermost. They needed an experience in the things of God, of faith, of hardship, of sanctification, and of self-sacrifice, along with an intellectual understanding of doctrine and theology. Knowledge alone was insufficient preparation for the rigorous challenges ahead. Jesus gave them both.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. The lesson deals with the need of *teaching* (impartation of knowledge) and *training* (formation and impartation of skills) for church leaders and it looks at how Jesus, the Master Teacher and Master Trainer, provided this for His immediate disciples.
3. Sunday’s lesson concentrates on two points: Jesus’ night spent in prayer; and His ordaining and commissioning the apostles in order to invest them with authority.
4. “Choosing effectively required advanced wisdom. Jesus approached His heavenly Father through prayer to acquire that wisdom. Likewise, prayer should precede the selection of leadership candidates in twenty-first-century disciple making. Since

Christ apparently believed that He needed extensive prayer in order to obtain the wisdom required, how much more should today's Christians petition for divine wisdom when choosing those charged with overseeing the progress of the Great Commission." (Sunday's lesson)

5. There is no question that prayer is important in all aspects of Christian life, including choosing leaders. But while making this point, we need to be careful: If Jesus prayed longer than one night, would He choose better candidates (perhaps dropping Judas from the list?) If we prayed not one night but seven nights before a General Conference session, would we have better leaders? It is easy to perceive prayer as some kind of magic and expect a direct proportion between time spent in prayer and quality of outcome. In that case, praying 23 hours and 59 minutes each day would be the ultimate example of devotion! However, life on this planet is more complex than that.
6. "Having chosen twelve, Jesus designated them apostles—His commissioned representatives invested with spiritual authority. The larger group of disciples witnessed this *ordaining* or *commissioning* with no apparent jealousy or negative feelings. Later, Jesus would commission larger groups of seventy-two and, perhaps, others not recorded within Scripture." (Sunday's lesson)

Where in the Bible is it recorded that:

- a) Jesus ordained or commissioned the twelve?
- b) The larger group witnessed their ordination with no jealousy or negative feelings?
- c) That later Jesus commissioned the larger group of 72?

Isn't this reading a much later ecclesiastical development back into the text? We tend to object when others do that with texts like Revelation 1:10 or Matthew 16:18-19.

7. "Christianity highly regards intelligence, thinking, and imagination. The existence of reasoned thought throughout Scripture, the tremendous respect afforded [to] teachers within Judaism, and the priceless attention that scribes devoted to preserving ancient writings all testify to the importance of knowledge.

Christianity is not an irrational faith. Nevertheless, certain elements within Christianity have elevated emotion, feeling, and experience above knowledge. This mindset declares that what people believe is relatively unimportant because experience alone is meaningful. Obedience and adherence to specific truths are deemed relatively unimportant; emotion and religious excitement become the measuring stick for spiritual genuineness.

Scripture's very existence counters this mindless fascination with experience. Experience without knowledge becomes a supercharged missile without direction. Conversely, knowledge without experience becomes lifeless and oftentimes

legalistic.” (Monday’s lesson) **How can we have a balance between knowledge and experience, since both are obviously needed?**

“Twenty-first-century disciple makers *must* thoroughly acquaint themselves with Scripture, the source of authentic spiritual information. Likewise, they should disseminate doctrine and teachings without regard to popularity or convenience. God expects seasoned believers to withhold nothing, patiently guiding infant converts into an ever-expanding understanding and appreciation for the wonderful, life-changing truths of Christianity—especially the present truth of the three angels’ messages.” (Tuesday’s lesson) Does our fascination with doctrine come from reading the Bible story or from a post-Enlightenment mindset? What role does doctrine play in discipleship (the theme of the quarter) and in training leaders (the theme of this lesson)?

8. “It is of no small interest and importance that in choosing leaders, Jesus picked from among the humbler, less-educated class of people. Christ did not choose the learning or eloquence of the Sanhedrin. Passing by the self-righteous teachers, the Master Worker chose humble, unlearned men to proclaim the truths that were to move the world. [...] We must, though, be careful to not make wrong assumptions about why Jesus chose the ones that He did. Jesus was not against the educated or learned class; He Himself displayed, at a young age (*Luke 2:46, 47*), a great deal of knowledge. It’s just that so often those with the most education, wealth, or power aren’t ready to humble themselves in the way that one, especially a leader, needs to in order for the Lord to be able to use them. This is not always the case, of course; the Lord did use such men (think of Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea; see also Acts 6:7). It just means that so often these types tend not to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.” (Wednesday’s lesson) **Is openness a prerogative of one class, or one group? What do you think makes people open and what makes people narrow-minded?**
9. “What does this first chapter of Acts in the formation of the early church show us about the need for God-ordained leaders? What were they looking for in a leader? (*See vs. 22.*) What can we take away from this need for ourselves as we seek the right leaders?” (Thursday’s lesson) Is the book of Acts primarily a prescriptive recipe of what we are supposed to do, or is it primarily a descriptive account of the successes and mistakes of the early church as they worked to spread the Gospel message from Jerusalem to Rome? Perhaps some of the lessons worth learning from Acts 1 would be: Wait for God, do not rush! Do not follow a method just because God blessed it in the OT times (Matthias vs. Paul). Certainly knowledge of the English language would be important for a church leader in the 21st century, even while it was irrelevant in apostolic times!
10. “What do you look for in church leaders? And why? What are the top three things that you want to see in them? Bring your answer to class on Sabbath and compare answers.” (Thursday’s lesson) What can we learn from each other’s answers? What do we do when our answers differ? Which characteristics are crucial for

contemporary church leaders? How can we disciple the members so that such leaders have a chance to develop and appear?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

According to the Scriptures, there are some people on this earth who attempt to live without the use of any stimulant at all. They would not dream of indulging in the use of any harmful drug. But neither are they very much under the influence of the Spirit of God. Neither cold nor hot, they evidently are not greatly stimulated by the Holy Spirit. If they were, they would be overflowing with love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, and all the other fruits of the Spirit. They would be full of zeal and energy for God's cause. Their lives would be full of purpose and meaning. It would be a pleasure for them to do God's will.

These people are not particularly bad. Neither are they particularly good. They are just generally unstimulated and lukewarm, as the Bible describes them in the Laodicean message of Revelation 3:14-22. They plod along their unstimulated way, hoping like the poor Pharisees of old that someday they will make it to the kingdom.

But they will never make it in this condition. God describes such people as wretched and miserable. And what is more wretched and miserable than an unstimulated religious experience, when Christianity becomes little more than unenthusiastic conformity to the regulations and requirements of the church! This is why God counsels us to repent and buy of Him eyesalve, the spiritual insight that the Holy Spirit brings, so that we may have more faith, love, zeal, and energy, and all the other effects of the Spirit's presence.

It has been observed that the cause of God is in need of leaders who are men of zeal and strong feeling, but who have their feelings under control. Jesus was this kind of person. So were Moses, Daniel, Paul, and the great leaders of the Christian church.

The last generation of believers will be people who are greatly stimulated about righteousness, salvation, and the coming of Christ. We must be too, if we expect to be among that stalwart group.

It is obviously wrong to be under the influence of artificial stimulants. Is it perhaps equally wrong to be under the influence of no spirit at all?

Surely the only successful way one can face life and make ready for the life to come is to remain under the stimulating and transforming influence of the Spirit of God. Here is a stimulus that will never let us down. God's gracious Spirit will never mislead or enslave. He loves us and even prays for us with "sighs too deep for words." Romans 8:26, RSV.

It was the same Holy Spirit that guided Jesus while He limited Himself to human form. In the power of this Spirit Jesus proclaimed the truth and brought healing and new freedom to those

who could accept His good news about God. {Maxwell, A. Graham. *I Want to Be Free*, pp. 51-52. Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1970}

How God Won Saul

God “stuck” with his enemy Saul and turned him into Paul, the great apostle of trust and love. Before Saul met Jesus on the Damascus road, he was utterly dedicated to eradicating what he believed to be dangerously false teachings about God. If anyone had dared suggest that he was actually God’s enemy, Saul would have been highly incensed. He had reason to regard himself as God’s most zealous, hardworking servant and defender of the truth.

But Saul worshipped an unfriendly god who would use force to have his way. So in the name of the god he knew, Saul tried to force the early Christians to give up their heresy and come back to the truth. If they refused, he would have them arrested and even destroyed—just as he believed his god would do.

That’s why Saul could assist in stoning so good a man as Stephen. He did not enjoy the execution, but he “approved of their killing him.” He remembered the story of Sinai. Did not the just and holy God direct that the disobedient should be stoned or shot?

“Please Forgive Saul”

How could God win a man like Saul to be his friend, the friend of a friendly God?

The Lord chose to confront his future friend on the road to Damascus. Saul was troubled by his memories of that execution. Stephen had shown remarkable knowledge of the Scriptures, and Saul’s conscience still acknowledged the authority of truth.

Perhaps especially disturbing was Stephen’s prayer of forgiveness just before he died: “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” There were reports that the heretic Jesus had behaved the same way on the cross: “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.” If these two men really were ungodly heretics, how could they endure such torture with such godlike grace?

But, Saul could have reasoned, what about all those stories of divine wrath and retribution, the exercise of justice in stamping out sinners and sin? Had not the chief administrators and theologians authorized him to carry out this unpleasant but holy mission? So Saul continued on his way to Damascus, “still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.”

Would it have done any good for God to tap him gently on the shoulder and inquire, “One moment, Saul, could I have a word with you?” Saul wouldn’t even have felt God’s touch. He certainly couldn’t have heard the still, small voice. First something dramatic must be done to capture Saul’s attention.

In a blaze of light, God floored him right there on the road. More than that, to ensure his undivided attention to what God had to say, he took away his eyesight for a while.

As Saul lay helpless on the road, he must have been shocked to discover that his assailant was none other than the meek and gentle Heretic he had once despised as weak—teaching such nonsense as loving our enemies and even praying for the Romans!

“But he could have killed me just now,” Saul may have thought to himself. “I would have, if I’d been in his place. Why is he not destroying me the way I’ve been destroying his disciples? Instead, I hear him talking to me softly in my own language. And he’s talking about my conscience!

“I’m sorry, Lord. I was terribly wrong. Now please accept me as your servant, and tell me what you want me to do.” Years later, in his letter to the believers in Rome, Saul—now called Paul—was honored to introduce himself as “a servant (or slave) of Jesus Christ.”

Paul, the Servant

But God wanted more from Saul than just submissive service. So he gave him no specific orders at that time, except to get up and go on to Damascus. “There you will be told all that you are appointed to do.”

A man named Ananias met him in the city with the friendly welcome, “Saul, my brother, receive your sight again!” Then Ananias went on to give a description of God’s great expectations of his new disciple. Saul was to be God’s assistant in making known the truth. “The God of our fathers,” Ananias continued, “appointed you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear him speak, because you are to be his witness to tell the world what you have seen and heard.”

Paul, the Understanding Friend

As Paul reflected on God’s persuasive skill in treating him so firmly but graciously on the Damascus road, he was changed into more than a faithful servant. He became a most understanding friend, whose highest aim was to witness to the truth about his Lord by treating others as God had treated him.

“Imitate me, as I imitate Christ,” he wrote to the Corinthians. Never again would he resort to the abuse of force. To those who disagreed with him—even about important matters—he would say, “Let everyone be fully convinced in his own mind.” And of those who felt free to criticize and condemn, he would ask, “Who are you to pass judgment on another?”

Paul showed how well he knew God, and understood the ways of friendship and trust, by his Christ-like dealing with grossly misbehaving members of the church in Corinth. At first he appealed to them with reason and love. It was to them that he wrote the famous chapter on

love that we now know as 1 Corinthians 13. But they were not impressed, and disdainfully rejected his advice.

Before Damascus, Paul would have known exactly what to do—imprison them, have a few of them stoned! But now, of course, this was out of the question. He decided to visit them in person, travelling from Ephesus to Corinth. There he was rudely insulted as weak and vacillating. They scorned his claim to be an apostle and challenged his authority to correct them at all.

Some scoffed, “His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.” Obviously they would not take him seriously until he did something to win their respect.

Paul returned to Ephesus to decide his next move. It seemed clear that more gentle talk about love would only worsen the problem. Like the teacher in the burning school, should he risk misunderstanding by sternly raising his voice? Would they then accuse him of more vacillation, of contradicting his own chapter on love?

He was committed to following the example of Christ—if only he could know what the Lord would do in such a situation. But he *did* know. Christ raised his voice on Sinai to win respect and attention. He raised it again on the Damascus road, for which his former foe will be eternally grateful.

Paul made his decision. He sent a blistering letter. It was so stern that he cried as he wrote it. Worried that he might be misunderstood, he couldn’t wait for a reply, and started out again for Corinth. He began to regret what he had written, but only for a while. For on the way he received the news that the emergency measure had succeeded. Raising his voice had worked! The letter had been received with “fear and trembling.” And with new-found respect, the apostle’s advice had been fully accepted.

Can the God Who Stoned Achan Be Trusted?

As Paul cried while writing to the sinners in Corinth, so God, too, must have wept as he ordered the execution of Achan and his whole family. And he required their fellow Israelites to stone them, then burn the remains. Could such a God ever be trusted as a friend?

As they crossed the border into hostile Canaan, the people’s only hope of survival lay in taking God seriously enough to follow his instructions in every detail. There was danger that Achan’s rebellious and disrespectful spirit would spread throughout the camp.

In a day when life was held all too cheaply—the people had already told Joshua that anyone who disobeyed him should be put to death—it was necessary that God’s discipline be sufficiently awful and dramatic to make an adequate impression. But as the stones were finding

their target, how the one who even sees the little sparrow fall must have hated every horrible moment!

A Consistent Picture of God

A hundred and thirty-five trips through all sixty-six books, in company with thousands of people, have served to convince me that the Biblical record reveals a consistent picture of an infinitely powerful but equally gracious and trustworthy God, whose ultimate purpose for his children is the freedom of understanding friendship.

As he works toward this goal, he is willing to stoop and meet us where we are, leading us no faster than we're able to follow, speaking a language we can respect and understand. To keep open the channels of communication, he has often resorted to measures that risk misunderstanding.

To his enemies and careless observers, these are acts of an unfriendly God. But to understanding friends, they are further evidence of God's trustworthiness that is the basis of their trust.

And without such trust, there can be no true friendship. {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends*, pp. 37-42. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.}

<http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter3.html>

Further Study with Ellen White

Those who live in close fellowship with Christ will be promoted by Him to positions of trust. The servant who does the best he can for his Master is admitted to familiar intercourse with the One whose commands he loves to obey. In the faithful discharge of duty we may become one with Christ, for those who are obeying God's commands may speak to Him freely. The one who talks most familiarly with his divine leader has the most exalted conception of His greatness and is the most obedient to His commands. {TMK 296.2}

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. . . . Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." . . . {TMK 296.3}

The character of the one who comes to God in faith will bear witness that the Saviour has entered into his life, directing all, pervading all. Such a one is continually asking, "Is this Thy will and way, O my Saviour?" Constantly he looks to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of his faith. He consults the will of his divine Friend in reference to all his actions, for he knows that in this

confidence is his strength. He has made it a habit to lift up the heart to God in every perplexity. . . . {TMK 296.4}

Before God's servants take up any work, they are to pray to God in all humility, with a sense of their dependence upon God, realizing that they must be worked by His Spirit. They are to guard against setting themselves up as kings, because if they do this, they will dishonor the Lord and make a failure of their work. "All ye are brethren." {UL 74.2}

Man's ingenuity, his judgment, his power to execute, all come from God. To God's service all should be devoted. The principles of the Bible are to control the Lord's servants. His workers are ever to do justice and judgment, steadfastly keeping the way of the Lord. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). Make this the point round which your life centers, and then all things needful will be given you. Put the Redeemer's interests before your own or those of any other human being. He has bought you, and all your powers belong to Him. {UL 74.3}

Christ was establishing a kingdom on different principles. He called men, not to authority, but to service, the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. Power, position, talent, education, placed their possessor under the greater obligation to serve his fellows. To even the lowliest of Christ's disciples it is said, "All things are for your sakes." 2 Corinthians 4:15. {DA 550.3}

"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Among His disciples Christ was in every sense a caretaker, a burden bearer. He shared their poverty, He practiced self-denial on their account, He went before them to smooth the more difficult places, and soon He would consummate His work on earth by laying down His life. The principle on which Christ acted is to actuate the members of the church which is His body. The plan and ground of salvation is love. In the kingdom of Christ those are greatest who follow the example He has given, and act as shepherds of His flock. {DA 550.4}

Daily beset by temptation, constantly opposed by the leaders of the people, Christ knew that He must strengthen His humanity by prayer. In order to be a blessing to men, He must commune with God, pleading for energy, perseverance, and steadfastness. Thus He showed His disciples where His strength lay. Without this daily communion with God, no human being can gain power for service. Christ alone can direct the thoughts aright. He alone can give noble aspirations and fashion the character after the divine similitude. If we draw near to Him in earnest prayer, He will fill our hearts with high and holy purposes, and with deep longings for purity and righteousness. The dangers thickening around us demand from those who have an experience in the things of God, a watchful supervision. Those who walk humbly before God, distrustful of their own wisdom, will realize their danger and will know God's keeping care. {CT 323.2}

It was by personal contact and association that Jesus trained His disciples. Sometimes He taught them, sitting among them on the mountainside; sometimes beside the sea, or walking with them by the way, He revealed the mysteries of the kingdom of God. He did not sermonize as men do today. Wherever hearts were open to receive the divine message, He unfolded the truths of the way of salvation. He did not command His disciples to do this or that, but said, "Follow Me." On His journeys through country and cities He took them with Him, that they might see how He taught the people. He linked their interest with His, and they united with Him in the work. {DA 152.1}

No other life was ever so crowded with labor and responsibility as was that of Jesus; yet how often He was found in prayer! How constant was His communion with God! Again and again in the history of His earthly life are found records such as these: "Rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." "Great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed." "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Mark 1:35; Luke 5:15, 16; 6:12. {DA 362.3}

In a life wholly devoted to the good of others, the Saviour found it necessary to withdraw from the thoroughfares of travel and from the throng that followed Him day after day. He must turn aside from a life of ceaseless activity and contact with human needs, to seek retirement and unbroken communion with His Father. As one with us, a sharer in our needs and weaknesses, He was wholly dependent upon God, and in the secret place of prayer He sought divine strength, that He might go forth braced for duty and trial. In a world of sin Jesus endured struggles and torture of soul. In communion with God He could unburden the sorrows that were crushing Him. Here He found comfort and joy. {DA 362.4}

In Christ the cry of humanity reached the Father of infinite pity. As a man He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. Through continual communion He received life from God, that He might impart life to the world. His experience is to be ours. {DA 363.1}

"Come ye yourselves apart," He bids us. If we would give heed to His word, we should be stronger and more useful. The disciples sought Jesus, and told Him all things; and He encouraged and instructed them. If today we would take time to go to Jesus and tell Him our needs, we should not be disappointed; He would be at our right hand to help us. We need more simplicity, more trust and confidence in our Saviour. He whose name is called "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace;" He of whom it is written, "The government shall be upon His shoulder," is the Wonderful Counselor. We are invited to ask wisdom of Him. He "giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." Isaiah 9:6; James 1:5. {DA 363.2}

Man needs a power outside of and beyond himself, to restore him to the likeness of God, and enable him to do the work of God; but this does not make the human agency unessential. Humanity lays hold upon divine power, Christ dwells in the heart by faith; and through co-operation with the divine, the power of man becomes efficient for good. {DA 296.4}

He who called the fisherman of Galilee is still calling men to His service. And He is just as willing to manifest His power through us as through the first disciples. However imperfect and sinful we may be, the Lord holds out to us the offer of partnership with Himself, of apprenticeship to Christ. He invites us to come under the divine instruction, that, uniting with Christ, we may work the works of God. {DA 297.1}

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves.” 2 Corinthians 4:7, R. V. This is why the preaching of the gospel was committed to erring men rather than to the angels. It is manifest that the power which works through the weakness of humanity is the power of God; and thus we are encouraged to believe that the power which can help others as weak as ourselves can help us. And those who are themselves “compassed with infirmity” should be able to “have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.” Hebrews 5:2. Having been in peril themselves, they are acquainted with the dangers and difficulties of the way, and for this reason are called to reach out for others in like peril. There are souls perplexed with doubt, burdened with infirmities, weak in faith, and unable to grasp the Unseen; but a friend whom they can see, coming to them in Christ’s stead, can be a connecting link to fasten their trembling faith upon Christ. {DA 297.2}

We are to be laborers together with the heavenly angels in presenting Jesus to the world. With almost impatient eagerness the angels wait for our co-operation; for man must be the channel to communicate with man. And when we give ourselves to Christ in wholehearted devotion, angels rejoice that they may speak through our voices to reveal God’s love. {DA 297.3}

It is impossible for any of us by our own power or our own efforts to work this change in ourselves. It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which Jesus said He would send into the world, that changes our character into the image of Christ; and when this is accomplished, we reflect as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. That is, the character of the one who thus beholds Christ is so like His that one looking at him sees Christ’s own character shining out as from a mirror. Imperceptibly to ourselves, we are changed day by day from our ways and will into the ways and will of Christ, into the loveliness of His character. Thus we grow up into Christ, and unconsciously reflect His image. . . . {HP 337.3}

It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon the church.

. . . It is the privilege of every son and daughter of God to have the indwelling of the Spirit. {OHC 150.3}

God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God, develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like his Master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. So quickened is he by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness, that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. {GW 285.3}

Christ promised that the Holy Spirit should abide with those who wrestle for victory over sin, to demonstrate the power of divine might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Of what avail would it be to us that the only begotten Son of God humbled Himself, endured the temptations of the wily foe, and died, the just for the unjust, if the Spirit had not been given as a constant, working, regenerating agent, to make effectual in each individual case what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer? {GW 286.1}

It is the Spirit that causes to shine into darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness; that makes men's hearts burn within them with an awakened realization of the truths of eternity; that presents before the mind the great standard of righteousness, and convinces of sin; that inspires faith in Him who alone can save from sin; that works to transform character by withdrawing the affections of men from those things which are temporal and perishable, and fixing them upon the eternal inheritance. The Spirit recreates, refines, and sanctifies human beings, fitting them to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. {GW 286.3}

It is through the mighty agency of the Holy Spirit that the government of Satan is to be subdued and subjected. It is the Holy Spirit that convinces of sin, and expels it from the soul by the consent of the human agent. The mind is then brought under a new law, and that law is the royal law of liberty. Jesus came to break the shackles of sin-slavery from the soul; for sin can triumph only when the liberty of the soul is extinguished. Jesus reached to the very depth of human woe and misery, and His love attracts man to Himself. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, He lifts the mind up from its degradation, and fastens it upon the eternal reality. Through the merits of Christ man may be able to exercise the noblest powers of his being, and expel sin from his soul. . . . {TDG 124.2}

The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives, have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love. {AA 49.2}

Wherever there is union with Christ there is love. Whatever other fruits we may bear, if love be missing, they profit nothing. Love to God and our neighbor is the very essence of our religion. No one can love Christ and not love His children. When we are united to Christ, we have the mind of Christ. Purity and love shine forth in the character, meekness and truth control the life. The very expression of the countenance is changed. Christ abiding in the soul exerts a transforming power, and the outward aspect bears witness to the peace and joy that reign within. We drink in the love of Christ, as the branch draws nourishment from the vine. If we are grafted in Christ, if fiber by fiber we have been united with the Living Vine, we shall give evidence of the fact by bearing rich clusters of living fruit. If we are connected with the Light, we shall be channels of light, and in our words and works we shall reflect light to the world. Those who are truly Christians are bound with the chain of love which links earth to heaven, which binds finite man to the infinite God. The light that shines in the face of Jesus Christ shines in the hearts of His followers, to the glory of God. {1SM 337.2}

By beholding we are to become changed; and as we meditate upon the perfections of the divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of His purity. It is by faith in the Son of God that transformation takes place in the character, and the child of wrath becomes the child of God. He passes from death unto life; he becomes spiritual and discerns spiritual things. The wisdom of God enlightens his mind, and he beholds wondrous things out of His law. As a man is converted by the truth, the work of transformation of character goes on. He has an increased measure of understanding. In becoming a man of obedience to God, he has the mind of Christ, and the will of God becomes his will. {1SM 338.1}

He who places himself unreservedly under the guidance of the Spirit of God, will find that his mind expands and develops. He obtains an education in the service of God which is not one-sided and deficient, developing a one-sided character, but one which results in symmetry and completeness. Weaknesses that have been manifested in a vacillating will and powerless character, are overcome, for continual devotion and piety bring the man in such close relation to Christ that he has the mind of Christ. He is one with Christ, having soundness and strength of

principle. His perception is clear, and he manifests that wisdom which comes from God.
{1SM 338.2}

Only as they were united with Christ could the disciples hope to have the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit and the co-operation of angels of heaven. With the help of these divine agencies they would present before the world a united front and would be victorious in the conflict they were compelled to wage unceasingly against the powers of darkness. As they should continue to labor unitedly, heavenly messengers would go before them, opening the way; hearts would be prepared for the reception of truth, and many would be won to Christ.
{AA 90.2}