

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Third Quarter 2014: *The Teachings of Jesus*
Lesson 5 “How to Be Saved”

Read for this week’s study

Luke 5:27–32; 13:1–5; Matthew 22:2–14; Zechariah 3:1–5; John 8:30, 31; Luke 14:25–27.

Memory Text

“ ‘And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life’ ” (John 3:14, 15, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Recognize Your Need
- III. Repent
- IV. Believe in Jesus
- V. The Wedding Garment
- VI. Follow Jesus
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Luke 5:27-32. How can you know which group you are in? (Sunday’s lesson)
2. How is it possible to acknowledge that we are sinners if it is precisely our sins that are preventing us from recognizing our true condition? How can we gain the spiritual eyesight to understand our desperate need of a Savior? See John 16:8. See also Revelation 3:17-18. (Sunday’s lesson)
3. According to Monday’s lesson, what are the three aspects of the biblical meaning of repentance?
4. What are the best evidences of God’s love? What have you seen and experienced and learned that gives you powerful reasons to trust in His goodness? (Monday’s lesson)
5. To a woman who had lived a sinful life Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven. . . . Your faith has saved you.” Luke 7: 48-50. What does that mean? How is it possible for our faith to save us? If you don’t get healed when you pray for it does it mean you don’t have enough faith? (Tuesday’s lesson)

6. Read Matthew 22:2-14. Why did the king want to be sure that every guest had the wedding garment for the feast? What did that garment represent? See also Isaiah 61:10; Zechariah 3:1-5. (Wednesday's lesson)
7. What two elements are essential in order to be a disciple of Jesus? See John 8:30-31. What does it mean to "abide" or "remain" in him? What is the relationship between believing and abiding? (Thursday's lesson)
8. What difference does it make that faith is always a verb in John rather than a noun? According to Luke 14:25-27, what is the high cost of being a disciple of Jesus? What does this mean in practical terms? (Thursday's lesson)
9. Many try to drown their sense of guilt with alcohol, drugs, worldly pleasures, or frenzied activities. Why do none of these methods work? (Friday's lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Some say, "Yes, but Paul cleared this all up. What you need most is forgiveness." No, I don't see that at all! I see Paul agreeing with Jesus in His words to Nicodemus, "Nicodemus, unless you be forgiven ... ?" No! "Unless you be born again, you'll not see the kingdom." That's all there is to it.

Now, I think that the message of forgiveness is only part of the revelation of the truth about God. The truth about forgiveness is that God is forgiveness personified. God doesn't forgive us in response to an adequate speech of repentance and confession. And that's why Jesus told the prodigal son story. When did the father forgive the prodigal son? Even as he helped him pack his bags to leave. And the greatest discovery the prodigal son made was, half way through his speech of repentance, he realized that his father had long since forgiven him. The message of forgiveness is simply part of the revelation of the truth about God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Ephesians & Colossians, recorded May, 1982 Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/67MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/68MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Now, if we go on acting in a lawless, rebellious way, deliberately, after receiving a knowledge of the truth, if we're still rebellious, surely there's no hope. That's true; if we persist in this rebelliousness. 1 John 3:9 says, "The man that's born of God does not commit sin." The Greek is, "The man who is born of God does not go on practicing sin". That is, the rebelliousness is gone, and love and faith have taken its place, in this man being born of the Holy Spirit. But if I

persist in rebelliousness? Or, take Romans 14, “sin is a breach of trust.” If I persist in distrusting God, if I go on distrusting Him, then what can He do?

A doctor cannot help a patient who does not trust him. And that’s just stating a fact of life, here. And this should not discourage a struggling saint who very much wants to be saved. But as 1 John 2 says, if he does sin, “We have an Advocate with the Father.” If we come back because we do trust Him, and we do not wish to do this! Now, that’s not making excuses. That’s very plain. There is no excuse for rebellion, even for the single sin. There is no excuse for Moses’s smiting the rock at that moment. But my, he repented! Was he taken back?

You see, there was no rebelliousness there. It was gone. There was a flaring up of rebelliousness and pride and arrogance and irritability. There was, indeed, for a moment, and he repented of it. If a man repents and confesses his sin, is God trustworthy to take him back? 1 John 1:9. By all means. How many times can you come back? How many times did Jesus say we should be willing to forgive? Well, how many times do you think the Father would be willing to forgive? There’s no limit to that. It’s just that if the prodigal son had rebelliously stayed in the pigpen, then the story would not have ended the way it did. If there hadn’t been a little trust in his father, he would never have gone home. So, as long as we persist in rejecting the truth, even if we don’t know it fully, because the prodigal son didn’t know that much about his father. I mean, there isn’t evidence that he really knew his father, or he wouldn’t have planned what he did to win his father’s favor. At least he knew it was nicer at home than in the pigpen, and that got him on the way. And maybe just a little thing like that might get us started toward home. There’s a beginning of trust and love for God that starts us out. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Hebrews, recorded July, 1982 Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/73MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/74MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

What about the prodigal son’s story? That’s Luke, isn’t it? What does that tell us about God that is of great consequence in the Great Controversy? You remember the charges are that God is arbitrary, exacting, vengeful, unforgiving, and severe, and has said, “Either love and obey Me or I’ll kill you.” And Jesus told the story of the prodigal son. As you understand that whole story, when did the father forgive his son? Was it when he finished the speech of repentance? Because that’s the proper order, isn’t it? We repent, we confess, then He forgives. Did the father think, “Well, that was a very fine and genuine speech of repentance and confession. I think I’ll forgive him”? When do you think the father forgave the son?

COMMENT: Before he left home.

Before he left home! Maybe he helped him pack his bags, because he loved his son. And I think if this story teaches us anything, it is that God is forgiveness personified. He's always forgiving. I believe Lucifer dies in the presence of the One who created him, who will look on him with forgiveness, but the devil does not appreciate it. He's turned this down. The kindness of God has not led Satan to repentance; Romans 2:4. It has led others of us to repentance. God is not two-faced. He always looks on His children with love and forgiveness, but it can be turned down. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Acts*, 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)

Faith, as I understand it, is a word we use to describe a relationship with God as with a person well known. The better we know him, the better this relationship may be.

Faith implies an attitude toward God of love, trust, and deepest admiration. It means having enough confidence in him, based on the more than adequate evidence revealed, to be willing to believe whatever he says, to accept whatever he offers, and to do whatever he wishes – without reservation—for the rest of eternity.

Anyone who has such faith is perfectly safe to save. This is why faith is the only requirement for heaven. {Maxwell, Graham. *Can God Be Trusted?*, 43. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 2002}

In the *King James* it says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Well, don't underestimate that. In the Greek there's only one word for "belief" or "faith" or "trust" or "confidence". It's always the same. And so to go to all the effort we sometimes do to show the difference between belief and faith is interesting in English, but it doesn't work in the Greek. There is only one word. So what Paul said was, "Trust in the Lord. Have confidence in the Lord. Place your faith in the Lord," or "believe". They're all exactly the same.

Is that enough? If you only have a minute, is that enough? Of course it depends on what we take faith to mean. This is no idle opinion. Faith means a whole attitude toward the One in whom you place your trust, implying a willingness to listen, love, and admire, and so on. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Acts*, recorded April, 1982 Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/59MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/60MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

How you define faith and trust enters into this. And we need to read other places. To me, faith is just a word we use to describe a relationship with God as with a person well known; and we get to know Him through the gospel. The good news is about God, that He is infinitely worthy of our trust. It implies an attitude toward God of love, and trust, and deepest admiration. It means having enough confidence in God, based upon the more than adequate evidence, all summed up in the good news, to be willing to believe what God says—as soon as we’re sure *He* said it! And to accept what God offers, as soon as we’re sure *He’s* offering it, and to do whatever God wishes, without reservation, as soon as we’re sure *He’s* asking us, and not somebody else. Anybody who has such a trusting relationship with God, of love, trust, and admiration, willing to listen, is perfectly safe to save.

He could die just beginning that relationship, like the thief on the cross. He would arise loving, trusting, and admiring that kind One in the middle. He will be willing to listen, and accept all kinds of instruction and correction. He is therefore safe to save. But you can’t regard God in that attitude without a new heart and a right spirit. So you are a new creature, which he’s going to mention in a moment.

And that’s what David eventually wanted—truth and honesty in the inner man. Mention honesty, and you remember Micah, Amos, Hosea, they all talked about this. All God asks of us is that we stand humbly in His presence with an honest willingness to listen, and let Him do for us whatever needs to be done.

I would add that even though with the passing of time I’m finding more and more that everything God has asked us to do makes such good sense and I agree with Him; I would have to say that being still somewhat ignorant and immature, I’m willing to obey this trustworthy God when He instructs me to do something beyond my present understanding.

Wouldn’t that be safe? Because He’s proved always to make such good sense in every other respect. And I think that’s what Abraham said to Him. “God, You’ve always made such good sense. But Your command to sacrifice the son of the promise makes no sense to me. But I know it will. So God, I’m on my way.” I believe faith says to God, “God, I hear You, and I’ve checked that carefully. It is You. And I am on my way. But as I go, in all reverence, may I ask why?”

And that’s how we come to know God. And for three days and three nights Abraham thought that through; and in the end he said, “God, I’m even beginning to think of ways in which You could work this out. I’m not telling You how, but I know You will; because You’ll not contradict Yourself in the promise You gave me about my son. Maybe You’ll resurrect my son. Just as You gave him miraculously, You could easily resurrect him. Or maybe You’ll provide a substitute.” And that’s what God chose to do. And Abraham is cited in Hebrews 11 as one who trusted God, but thought it through. Faith is not blind. You can jump off a cliff if you take leaps in the dark, and call that faith. It is not safe. History is strewn with the wreckage of people who leap in the

dark and call it faith. Light makes faith possible, and without it we ought to wait. {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>*

The nice thing that goes along with that is, the word “disciple” means “a learner”, “a pupil”, which implies an attitude, a learning attitude.

But the Laodicean says, “I’m rich and increased with goods, and I don’t need to know anything.” So he’s not a disciple. There are no Laodicean disciples; well, they’re bad disciples. But the very word itself, “disciple”, implies a willingness to listen and to learn, and to accept correction. So He says, “Go out into the world and see if you can persuade people to be willing to listen.” And what is it that moves people, but to picture what God is like, and maybe the kindness of God will lead some to repentance (that’s Romans 2:4), and to faith (that’s Romans 10:17). {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Acts, recorded April, 1982 Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links: <http://pkp.cc/59MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/60MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)*

Further Study with Ellen White

Amid the perplexities that will press upon the soul, there is only One who can help us out of all our difficulties, and relieve all our disquietude. We are to cast all our care upon Jesus, and bear in mind that He is present, and is directing us to commune with Him. We are to keep our minds stayed upon God; and in our weakness, He will be our strength; in our ignorance, He will be our wisdom; in our frailty, He will be our enduring might. {SD 27.2}

We may be assured that we need not go into the heavens to bring Jesus down to us, neither into the deep to bring Him up; for He is at our right hand, and His eye is ever upon us. We should ever seek to realize that the Lord is very near us, to be our counselor and guide. This is the only way in which we may have confidence toward God. {SD 27.3}

We need to educate and train the mind so that we shall have an intelligent faith, and have an understanding friendship with Jesus. Unless we continually cherish friendship between God and our souls, we shall separate from Him, and walk apart from Him. . . . We need the Captain of our salvation continually by our side. {SD 27.4}

Through influences seen and unseen, our Saviour is constantly at work to attract the minds of men from the unsatisfying pleasures of sin to the infinite blessings that may be theirs in Him. To all these souls, who are vainly seeking to drink from the broken cisterns of this world, the divine message is addressed, “Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17. {SC 28.1}

God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes, and grieve His Spirit; but when we repent, and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away. There are hindrances to be removed. Wrong feelings have been cherished, and there have been pride, self-sufficiency, impatience, and murmurings. All these separate us from God. Sins must be confessed; there must be a deeper work of grace in the heart. Those who feel weak and discouraged may become strong men of God, and do noble work for the Master. But they must work from a high standpoint; they must be influenced by no selfish motives. {1SM 350.3}

The Saviour is continually drawing men to repentance; they need only to submit to be drawn, and their hearts will be melted in penitence. {CT 365.4}

Repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ are the fruits of the renewing power of the grace of the Spirit. Repentance represents the process by which the soul seeks to reflect the image of Christ to the world. {ML 49.3}

If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein. {AA 52.5}

The work of grace upon the heart is not an instantaneous work. It is effected by continuous, daily watching and believing the promises of God. The repentant, believing one, who cherishes faith and earnestly desires the renewing grace of Christ, God will not turn away empty. He will give him grace. And ministering angels will aid him as he perseveres in his efforts to advance.—Manuscript 55, 1910. {Ev 287.3}

The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. . . . Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power. {DA 347.1}

Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine. {COL 312.2}

The heart in which Jesus makes His abode will be quickened, purified, guided, and ruled by the Holy Spirit, and the human agent will make strenuous efforts to bring his character into harmony with God. He will avoid everything that is contrary to the revealed will and mind of God. {SD 98.3}

The Lord God through Christ holds out His hand all the day long in invitations to the needy. He will receive all. He welcomes all. He rejects none. It is His glory to pardon the chief of sinners. He will take the prey from the mighty, He will deliver the captive, He will pluck the brand from

the burning. He will lower the golden chain of His mercy to the greatest depths of human wretchedness and guilt and lift up the debased soul contaminated with sin. But man must will to come, and cooperate in the work of saving his soul by availing himself of opportunities given him of God. The Lord forces no one. {TMK 235.2}

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. By such a one service is looked upon as drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully, and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {ST, July 22, 1897 par. 11}

Men and women may escape this doom if they will. It is true that Satan is the great originator of sin; yet this does not excuse any man for sinning; for he cannot force men to do evil. He tempts them to it, and makes sin look enticing and pleasant; but he has to leave it to their own wills whether they will do it or not. . . . He presents temptations in a manner to allure to evil, and man is a free moral agent to accept or refuse. {2T 294.1}

Satan is working with great diligence to compass the ruin of the souls of men. He has come down with great power, knowing that he has but a short time to work. Our only safety lies in following closely after Christ, walking in His wisdom, and practicing His truth. We cannot always readily detect the working of Satan; we do not know where he lays his traps. But Jesus understands the subtle arts of the enemy, and He can keep our feet in safe paths. . . . "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) Christ declares. {OHC 16.3}

The precious light of truth flashes upon the pathway of everyone who seeks for it. {OHC 16.7}