

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

First Quarter 2015: *Proverbs*

Lesson 6 “What You Get *Is* Not What You See”

Read for this week’s study

Proverbs 14; Dan. 7:25; Mark 12:30, 31; Prov. 15:3; Isa. 5:20; Proverbs 15; Matt. 20:26–28.

Memory Text

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Assurance of the Fool
- III. The Fear of the Wise
- IV. “The Eyes of the Lord”
- V. The Joy of the Lord
- VI. The Sovereignty of God
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Proverbs 14:12. Why is it so hard to know the truth about yourself? Why is it that others often see things in us to which we are completely blind? What are some ways we can learn the truth about our sinful ways? (Sabbath afternoon’s lesson)
2. Read Proverbs 14. List all the things it says about the “fool.” Can you give some contemporary examples of foolish behavior and beliefs? Which of these traits of character is particularly common in the Western world? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Proverbs 14 again. List all the things it says about the “wise.” How would the wise man of Proverbs deal with the toughest issues of today’s world? (Monday’s lesson)
4. What does it mean to “walk by faith and not by sight?” How do you do that in today’s world? (Monday’s lesson)
5. Proverbs 15:3 says that “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.” How does such a text make you feel? How does our picture of God affect the way we feel about His scrutiny? Why do you think the concepts of good and evil are so blurred in today’s world? (Tuesday’s lesson)
6. Read Proverbs 15. Note everything the chapter has to say about joy. What is the difference between joy and fun? Which do most people strive for the most? (Wednesday’s lesson)

7. Read Proverbs 16. What does it have to say about the sovereignty of God and human freedom of action? How does John 6:36-47 help to clarify this tension? (Thursday's lesson)
8. Read the chapter in *Ministry of Healing* called "Mind Cure" (240-260). What words, actions and attitudes best lend themselves to mental health? How can one develop a spirit of gratitude and praise? (Friday's lesson)
9. We cannot see, hear or touch God. Many draw from that that God does not exist or is irrelevant. What are some common everyday realities in which we have faith in things we cannot see, hear or touch? How do these realities help us to understand the limitations of our own senses and understanding? (Friday's lesson)
10. Why is it important to understand the reality of human freedom, even if God is ultimately in control? How do we reconcile the sovereignty of God with human freedom? (Friday's lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Do you know of any other stories in the Bible where an individual was signally blessed by God with talents and influence, and he wasted it all? And yet God blessed him in the end. Do you think of anybody coming up? Solomon! I think he's the classic case. He was even blessed with wisdom. Do God's gifts and blessings keep us from misbehaving? If God gives us something generously, can we abuse the gift? When He gives us gifts, He does not control our use of them, and this becomes a little terrifying. Do you want to be that free? I've had people say, "I love your message of freedom, but I sometimes wish I were not that free. I'd be willing to give God back about one-third of my freedom if that would get me into the kingdom." And God says, "I want people in My Kingdom who value freedom as highly as I do."

If God has paid such a price to keep us free, how can we give any of it back? But if we are this free, it means that God could bless you for 50 years with a magnificent life, and wisdom and insight, and influence, and you could win many, many people. But you're still free to blow it all and waste it. And look how Solomon was given wisdom, and yet he made a fool of himself. Samson was given great strength, which of course increased his ability to indulge himself. And he did. You remember, he could carouse all night long, and still cart the gates off in the morning, and dump them on the hillside.

It was dangerous for Solomon to have so much wisdom. You could become rather self-dependent, you know. And he did. He forgot God. And when he wrote his final book he said, "I wish I had remembered God when I was young. Remember your creator when you're young, and don't wait to remember Him when you get as old and tired as I am." But now, let's look at Solomon first and then Samson. In the end of his life when Solomon had wasted everything, and he was a tired and foolish old king, and he had ruined his son Rehoboam look what followed. He came to his senses, and he remembered God. He said, "God, I'm sorry. Can I come

back? And I'd be willing just to sweep floors." Does God take people back that way? Or does He take them completely back? How about the Prodigal Son? Did he come back as a servant, or did he come back fully reinstated? So God took Solomon back. How fully did He take him back? Solomon said, "Can I do anything to help others not do what I've done?"

And God said, "Yes. You can write Me a book." And Solomon replied, "But only holy men of God moved by the Holy Spirit write books in the Bible." God said, "That's right. I want you to write a book." And Solomon answered, "I can't understand this. Me? A holy man of God?"

"Yes. Please write Ecclesiastes for Me." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66—Joshua, Judges, Ruth*, recorded November 1983, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/11MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/12MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

On many occasions in the Bible the word fear does not mean "terror," but rather "reverence" or "respect." Usually the intended meaning is indicated by the context.

In the twenty-third Psalm, David sings of his freedom from fear now that the Lord is his Shepherd. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: For thou art with me" (Psalm 23:4, KJV). Here David is apparently using the word fear to mean "fright" or "anxiety." The Good News Translation renders this favorite verse, "Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me."

The same word translated "fear" is used in Psalm 128. "Blessed is every one who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways! You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you" (verses 1, 2). Here the word clearly means "reverence," for it could hardly be said that frightened people are happy! The Good News Translation interprets the same passage: "Happy is the person who has reverence for the Lord."

It is in this same sense that Solomon taught that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10). That is to say, "To be wise you must first have reverence for the Lord" (GNT).

God has much to teach us. But unless we are willing to stand reverently and quietly in his presence, we cannot hear him speak. Every teacher knows that unless there is respect and order in the room, very little learning can take place. {Maxwell, Graham. *Can God Be Trusted?*, 100-101. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 2002}

<http://speakingwellofgod.org/written-materials/can-god-be-trusted-chapters/chapter-10>

But it's what legalism represents that is so bad—the attempt to please God and win His favor and satisfy God's desires by a mechanical, impersonal obedience to a code. Think what this says about God. Now it seems righteous, and seems submissive, because it stresses the sovereignty of God; He has a right to tell us what to do, and I have no right to ask any questions either. He is the sovereign. For me to ask questions is even to suggest that I challenge His sovereignty. So “not for me to reason why, just for me to do”, and the rest may fit too, rather well, “and die.” For it has a very deadening effect on one's relationship with God, this unthinking, mechanical, impersonal obedience to a code.

And the prophets have dealt with this. In Amos, in the eighth chapter the prophet speaks of a blind, mechanical Sabbath keeping, when they would gather at the gates and watch the sun go down, and cry, “Oh when will the Sabbath be past that we may buy and sell, and get gain?” Or the singing in Amos; and God says, “I cannot stand the sound of your noisy hymns, because your hearts aren't in it”. And Isaiah notes their gathering for worship and he says, “Since your hearts aren't in it, who requires this trampling of my courts?” And he finally sums it up in the twenty-ninth chapter, “Your worship of me is but the commandments of men learned by rote.” Think what that implies about God. Actually, what the law itself describes is love; love for God and love for each other. And that's a very personal thing. And love cannot be produced by force; it cannot be commanded. It's interesting that Jesus says, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you,” but there's no way to command love, is there, actually? Nor can love be produced by self-discipline. There can be no love without loveable, loving persons. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, Galatians, part 4, recorded February, 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/4MMGALATIANS66>

Isn't it becoming clearer in Scripture, that when God indeed has used force and displayed His power, it may have gained attention, but it has never accomplished what He really wants? How about the Flood last time? Did the Flood lead people to deny the existence and power of God? No. When they built Babel, was it because they didn't believe in God? Was it because they didn't believe He had the power to destroy? Or was it because they *did* believe in God, and they *did* believe He had the power to destroy? No, they didn't think He could be trusted when He said, “I'll never drown you again.” They didn't believe that. That's why they built that tower. Isn't that what it says?

You see, they really believed in God, His existence and His power. That's why to believe that doesn't say which side you're on. The devils believe that, too. In fact, they had such confidence that God could destroy they built that tower as tall as they did. You see, the exercise of power and force may only make rebels worse, but it might for a moment gain the attention of those who are sinners indeed, but would love to hear what you would have to say, if they'd be quiet,

and everybody else also. And *God* wins people every once in a while, during those quiet moments. But the devil must mock Him for failing to be able to clear up the problems on this earth by the exercise of power. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66—Exodus*, recorded November 1983, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/3MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/4MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Recommended Listening:

Conversations About God session 9 “There Is No Need To Be Afraid Of God” is available at:

<http://pkp.cc/9MMCAG>

Further Study with Ellen White

It is not God’s purpose that any human being should yield his mind and will to the control of another, becoming a passive instrument in his hands. No one is to merge his individuality in that of another. He is not to look to any human being as the source of healing. His dependence must be in God. In the dignity of his God-given manhood he is to be controlled by God Himself, not by any human intelligence. {MH 242.3}

God desires to bring men into direct relation with Himself. In all His dealings with human beings He recognizes the principle of personal responsibility. He seeks to encourage a sense of personal dependence and to impress the need of personal guidance. He desires to bring the human into association with the divine, that men may be transformed into the divine likeness. Satan works to thwart this purpose. He seeks to encourage dependence upon men. When minds are turned away from God, the tempter can bring them under his rule. He can control humanity. {MH 242.4}

In every trial, if we seek Him, Christ will give us help. Our eyes will be opened to discern the healing promises recorded in His word. The Holy Spirit will teach us how to appropriate every blessing that will be an antidote to grief. For every bitter draft that is placed to our lips, we shall find a branch of healing. {MH 248.1}

We are not to let the future, with its hard problems, its unsatisfying prospects, make our hearts faint, our knees tremble, our hands hang down. “Let him take hold of My strength,” says the Mighty One, “that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.” Isaiah 27:5. Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His

word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. {MH 248.2}

If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy. {MH 249.1}

None need abandon themselves to discouragement and despair. Satan may come to you with the cruel suggestion, "Yours is a hopeless case. You are irredeemable." But there is hope for you in Christ. God does not bid us overcome in our own strength. He asks us to come close to His side. Whatever difficulties we labor under, which weigh down soul and body, He waits to make us free. {MH 249.2}

It is not wise to look to ourselves and study our emotions. If we do this, the enemy will present difficulties and temptations that weaken faith and destroy courage. Closely to study our emotions and give way to our feelings is to entertain doubt and entangle ourselves in perplexity. We are to look away from self to Jesus. {MH 249.4}

When temptations assail you, when care, perplexity, and darkness seem to surround your soul, look to the place where you last saw the light. Rest in Christ's love and under His protecting care. When sin struggles for the mastery in the heart, when guilt oppresses the soul and burdens the conscience, when unbelief clouds the mind, remember that Christ's grace is sufficient to subdue sin and banish the darkness. Entering into communion with the Saviour, we enter the region of peace. {MH 250.1}

Often your mind may be clouded because of pain. Then do not try to think. You know that Jesus loves you. He understands your weakness. You may do His will by simply resting in His arms. {MH 251.3}

It is a law of nature that our thoughts and feelings are encouraged and strengthened as we give them utterance. While words express thoughts, it is also true that thoughts follow words. If we would give more expression to our faith, rejoice more in the blessings that we know we have,—the great mercy and love of God,—we should have more faith and greater joy. No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a wellspring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow from the throne of God. {MH 251.4}

All heaven is interested in our salvation. The angels of God, thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, are commissioned to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. They guard us against evil and press back the powers of darkness that are seeking our

destruction. Have we not reason to be thankful every moment, thankful even when there are apparent difficulties in our pathway? {MH 253.3}

Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly, in God. We are His little children, and thus He deals with us. When we draw near to Him, He mercifully preserves us from the assaults of the enemy. Never will He betray one who trusts in Him as a child trusts in its parents. He sees the humble, trusting souls drawing near to Him, and in pity and love He draws near to them, and lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. "Touch them not," He says, "for they are mine. I have graven them upon the palms of my hands." He teaches them to exercise unquestioning faith in His power to work in their behalf. {OHC 85.5}

The God whom we serve is no respecter of persons. He who gave to Solomon the spirit of wise discernment is willing to impart the same blessing to His children today. "If any of you lack wisdom," His word declares, "let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. When a burden bearer desires wisdom more than he desires wealth, power, or fame, he will not be disappointed. Such a one will learn from the Great Teacher not only what to do, but how to do it in a way that will meet with the divine approval. {PK 31.1}

In all our work let us remember that the same Jesus who fed the multitude with five loaves and two small fishes is able today to give us the fruit of our labor. He who said to the fishers of Galilee, "Let down your nets for a draft," and who, as they obeyed, filled their nets till they broke, desires His people to see in this an evidence of what He will do for them today. The same God who gave the children of Israel manna from heaven still lives and reigns. He will guide His people and give skill and understanding in the work they are called to do. In answer to earnest prayer He will give wisdom to those who strive to do their duty conscientiously and intelligently. Under His blessing the work with which they are connected will grow to larger proportions, many will learn to be faithful burden bearers, and success will attend their efforts. {7T 61.2}

We can see only a little way before us; "but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." He never becomes confused. He sits above the confusion and distractions of the earth, and all things are opened to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He can order that which His providence sees is best. {ML 10.4}

God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith. {SC 105.2}

Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and teachable spirit. All should decide from the weight of evidence. {RH, September 16, 1873 par. 10}

Our happiness will be proportionate to our unselfish works, prompted by divine love, for in the plan of salvation God has appointed the law of action and reaction.—ST, Nov 25, 1886. (WM 302.) {2MCP 641.3}

Every ray of light shed upon others will be reflected upon our own hearts. Every kind and sympathizing word spoken to the sorrowful, every act to relieve the oppressed, and every gift to supply the necessities of our fellow beings, given or done with an eye to God's glory, will result in blessings to the giver. Those who are thus working are obeying a law of heaven and will receive the approval of God. The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood, and induces mental and physical health.—4T 56 (1876). {2MCP 642.1}

Here is the secret of content and peace and happiness. . . . The true Christian . . . seeks to live a life of usefulness and conform his habits to the example of Jesus. Such a one will find the truest happiness, the reward of well-doing. Such a one will be lifted above the slavery of an artificial life into the freedom and grace of Christlike simplicity. {ML 169.4}

If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of rightdoing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healing power, and those who are abundant in benefiting others will realize that wondrous blessing in both heart and life.—CTBH 3, 1890. (ML 150.) {2MCP 646.1}

As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. {2MCP 651.2}

“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Matthew 20:28. Christ's work below is His work above, and our reward for working with Him in this world will be the greater power and wider privilege of working with Him in the world to come. {Ed 308.1}

For what was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? Why was it that Satan's existence was not cut short at the outset of his rebellion? It was that the universe might be convinced of God's justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can

never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption—nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings? {Ed 308.3}

In our life here, earthly, sin-restricted though it is, the greatest joy and the highest education are in service. And in the future state, untrammelled by the limitations of sinful humanity, it is in service that our greatest joy and our highest education will be found—witnessing, and ever as we witness learning anew “the riches of the glory of this mystery;” “which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27. {Ed 309.1}

Christ carried out in His life His own divine teachings. His zeal never led Him to become passionate. He manifested consistency without obstinacy, benevolence without weakness, tenderness and sympathy without sentimentalism. He was highly social; yet He possessed a reserved dignity that did not encourage undue familiarity. His temperance never led to bigotry or austerity. He was not conformed to this world; yet He was not indifferent to the wants of the least among men. He was awake to the needs of all.—*Manuscript 132*, 1902. {Ev 636.1}

The Lord created man pure and holy. But Satan led him astray, perverting his principles and corrupting his mind, turning his thoughts into a wrong channel. His purpose was to make the world wholly corrupt. {RC 17.2}

Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, a new principle of mental and spiritual power was to be brought to man, who, through association with divinity, was to become one with God. Christ, the redeemer and restorer, was to sanctify and purify man’s mind, making it a power that would draw other minds to Himself. It is His purpose, by the elevating, sanctifying power of the truth, to give men nobility and dignity. He desires His children to reveal His character, to exert His influence, that other minds may be drawn into harmony with His mind. . . . {RC 17.4}

To all Christ sends 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” (Matthew 11:28-30). For ages this invitation, Come, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, has been ringing in clear tones above the world’s confusion and trouble. God will not give man up to his own way and will, to be lost, without a determined effort to recover him. The aim of Christ’s ministry, the scope of His far-reaching mercy and power, is without bounds.—Letter 78, Jan. 20, 1900, to Brother and Sister Haysmer. {TDG 28.7}