

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Second Quarter 2015: *The Book of Luke*

Lesson 4 “The Call to Discipleship”

Read for this week’s study

Luke 5:1–11; 6:12–16; 9:1–6, Matt. 10:5–15; Luke 10:1–24; Luke 9:23–25; Matt. 16:24–28.

Memory Text

“Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me’” (Luke 9:23, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Fishers of Men
- III. Selection of the Twelve
- IV. Commissioning of the Apostles
- V. Sending the Seventy
- VI. The Cost of Discipleship
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Jon Paulien

1. According to Sabbath afternoon’s lesson, “The mind that is devoted unreservedly to God develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfill the requirements of God.” This is compatible with the “stages of faith” we have explored together in the past. In a real sense, the stages of faith are what discipleship (topic of this lesson) is all about. How can we be more “unreserved” in our devotion to God?
2. Read Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20. What does each of these accounts say about the path of discipleship? Why does being a sinful man cause Peter to want to be separated from Jesus? Why do sinners tend to push away from God? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Luke 6:12-16 and 9:1-6. What do these verses tell us about the calling of the twelve apostles? Find out all you can about the ancient meaning of the term apostle. What does this term tell us about God? (Monday’s lesson)
4. According to *Desire of Ages*, page 294, the disciples were called “notwithstanding their imperfections.” Since being part of the church includes working with people at

different stages of faith and who have serious imperfections, how can we get along with each other and work effectively together? (Monday's lesson)

5. Read Luke 9:1-6 and Matthew 10:5-15. What spiritual truths can we learn from these verses? While the popular texts on the call to discipleship all talk exclusively about men, what implications does Luke 8:1-3 have for women? What principles for today lie behind Jesus' admonition to "take nothing for the journey" (Luke 9:3)? (Tuesday's lesson)
6. Read Luke 10:1-24. What does the account of sending out the 70 teach us about soul winning? What implications might there be in the fact that Luke has 70 disciples and not just 12? (Wednesday's lesson)
7. In Luke 10:24 Jesus tells His disciples that they have seen things that "prophets and kings" wished to see but did not. Are there things we have seen in our day that prophets and kings might have wished to see? (Wednesday's and Thursday's lessons)
8. Read Luke 9:23-25, Matthew 16:24-28 and Mark 8:34-36. What is the crucial message in these texts for those who would like to follow Jesus? How is it that the gospel can be both free and costly? Why is genuine Christian faith on the one hand so harmless, yet on the other hand so threatening to secular governments? (Thursday's lesson)
9. What did Jesus mean when He said that someone could gain the whole world and yet lose their soul? What does it mean that someone must lose their life in this world in order to save it? (Friday's Lesson)
10. Read Luke 10:17-20. What implications does this passage have for outreach today? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

"Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." (RSV) There was no one between. Now, years later, Jesus tried to encourage the disciples to believe that He wanted to speak to them as friends, as He used to talk to Moses. Look at John 15:15: "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (RSV)

And when friends speak together, they speak plainly, face to face. You notice that among friends there is explanation. There is understanding desired. It is quite apparent that Jesus didn't want blind obedience: "just do what you are told". He wanted the understanding cooperation of friends. He wanted His disciples to obey because they agreed and they admired God for His wise and gracious ways. That is the obedience of a free person. That is intelligent obedience, as the Bible describes it. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, session 11, "God's Emergency Measures" recorded April, 1984, Loma

Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/11MMCAG>*

Maybe the safest way to approach that in a brief time is to consider the word “obedience.” The Biblical word means “to hearken, to listen.” The Greek word is “to listen humbly.” As Micah said, “All God asks of us is that we walk humbly before our God.” The thief on the cross didn’t have much time to live up to all the precepts of the many, many laws that had been used as God’s emergency measures, but he certainly was humbly and gratefully and reverently willing to listen to the One in the middle. And he died willing to listen, sincerely, honestly willing to listen. He will arise in the same frame of mind. He has much to learn, but he’ll be a good pupil. He’ll be a good disciple. That means he’s willing to listen, to accept instruction, to accept correction. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, session 12, “God’s Law Is No Threat To Our Freedom” recorded April, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/12MMCAG>

Jesus made it plain, “I’ve come that you may know the Father, because to know Him is life eternal. And if only you knew the truth about My Father it would set you free. And all these rules and regulations that deprive you of your freedom, and make life so burdensome, I didn’t give those to you. Away with them!” {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

When, as erring, sinful beings, we come to Christ and become partakers of His pardoning grace, love springs up in the heart. Every burden is light, for the yoke that Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed shrouded in darkness, becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. {SC 59.2}

The loveliness of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. It was His delight to do the will of God. Love to God, zeal for His glory, was the controlling power in our Saviour’s life. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions. Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns. “We love, because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19, R.V. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity,

and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. {SC 59.3}

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 5:3; 2:4. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. {SC 60.2}

We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith. “Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.” 1 John 3:5, 6. Here is the true test. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in us, our feelings, our thoughts, our purposes, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God as expressed in the precepts of His holy law. “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.” 1 John 3:7. Righteousness is defined by the standard of God’s holy law, as expressed in the ten precepts given on Sinai. {SC 61.1}

Before asking them to leave their nets and fishing boats, Jesus had given them the assurance that God would supply their needs. The use of Peter’s boat for the work of the gospel had been richly repaid. He who is “rich unto all that call upon Him,” has said, “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.” Romans 10:12; Luke 6:38. In this measure He had rewarded the disciple’s service. And every sacrifice that is made in His ministry will be recompensed according to “the exceeding riches of His grace.” Ephesians 3:20; 2:7. {DA 249.1}

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, will quicken 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 fulfill 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 disciple that the Christian becomes like

Him in mind and character. Through a connection with Christ he will have clearer and broader views. His discernment will be more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. He who longs to be of service to Christ is so quickened by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. {DA 251.1}

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}

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}

When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to choose another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18. {SC 72.1}

Even John, the beloved disciple, the one who most fully reflected the likeness of the Saviour, did not naturally possess that loveliness of character. He was not only self-assertive and ambitious for honor, but impetuous, and resentful under injuries. But as the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own deficiency and was humbled by the knowledge. The strength and patience, the power and tenderness, the majesty and meekness, that he beheld in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration and love. Day by day his heart was drawn out toward Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. His resentful, ambitious temper was yielded to the molding power of Christ. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. The power of the love of Christ wrought a transformation of character. This is the sure result of union with Jesus. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Christ's Spirit, His love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven. {SC 73.1}

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience. {AA 560.3}

So will it be with all who behold Christ. The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. {AA 561.2}

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper. {DA 490.5}

There are Christians who think and speak altogether too much about the power of Satan. They think of their adversary, they pray about him, they talk about him, and he looms up greater and greater in their imagination. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but, thank God, we have a mighty Saviour, who cast out the evil one from heaven. Satan is pleased when we magnify his power. Why not talk of Jesus? Why not magnify His power and His love? {DA 493.1}

You may rise to the heights to which the Holy Spirit calls you. True religion means living the word in your practical life. Your profession is not of any value without the practical doing of the word. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." This is the condition of discipleship. {TM 127.2}

We are living epistles, known and read of all men. {5T 348.2}