

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Second Quarter 2015: *The Book of Luke*
Lesson 5 “Christ as *the Lord of the Sabbath*”

Read for this week’s study

Mark 1:21; 6:2; Luke 4:17–19; 31–37; 2 Cor. 5:17; Luke 6:1–11; 13:10–16.

Memory Text

“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27, 28, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. “As His Custom Was” (*Luke 4:16–30*; see also *Isa. 61:1, 2*)
- III. Sabbath: Its Message and Meaning
- IV. Sabbath Healings at Capernaum
- V. The Lord of the Sabbath
- VI. The Sabbath: The Sick Versus the Ox and the Donkey
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Jon Paulien

1. What did Jesus mean when He said, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath?” (Mark 2:27). Also, what does the Sabbath tell us about God? (Sabbath Afternoon)
2. In *Prophets and Kings*, 183, Ellen White explained, “In [Jesus’] day, the Sabbath had become so perverted that its observance reflected the character of selfish and arbitrary men rather than the character of God.” How would you understand this statement? (Sabbath Afternoon)
3. Read Mark 1:21; 6:2; Luke 4:16-30; 6:6-11; and 13:10-16. What do these texts teach us about Jesus and the Sabbath? What reasons can you think of to follow Jesus’ custom of worship on the Sabbath (Luke 4:16)? What difference does it make whether you worship on Saturday or Sunday? (Sunday’s lesson)
4. Read Luke 4:17-19. How would you understand Jesus’ words in this passage and how would you apply them in today’s world? (Monday’s lesson)

5. Read Luke 4:31-37. What do these verses tell us about the cosmic conflict? The reality of demons? The purpose of the Sabbath? What do these verses tell us about God? (Tuesday's lesson)
6. Read Luke 6:1-11. How did Jesus face the accusation that He and His disciples did not care for the Law and the Sabbath? How do we avoid the trap of placing traditions and human teachings in place of God's Word? (Wednesday's lesson)
7. What is the relation of the Sabbath to health care? To what degree should the practices and atmosphere of an Adventist hospital be different on the Sabbath? How can or should physicians practice their profession differently on Sabbath? (Friday's Lesson)
8. When Jesus says that He is "Lord of the Sabbath" (Luke 6:5), what implications does this statement have for Christians and their attitude toward the Sabbath? What does this statement tell us about God? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Yet Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for us; Mark 2:27. It was not to be a mere test of obedience, but rather to be a help. I believe that the great purpose of the Sabbath is to remind us of the truth that is the basis of our faith; the very truth that does set us free. In the first place, the Bible tells us in Exodus 20 and Exodus 31, that the Sabbath is designed to serve as a reminder that God created us; that we are His creatures. But to be more specific according to Colossians 1:16, the one who created us was none other than Christ himself. The seventh-day Sabbath reminds us that the one who came to save us is also the one who made us in the beginning. The gentle Jesus who died on Calvary is also the supreme, all powerful creator of the universe. God did not send some subordinate person to die for us. The Creator came Himself—one who is equal with God, for He is God. By keeping holy the seventh-day Sabbath, we acknowledge our faith in Jesus as not only our Savior, but also our Creator and our God.

A second way in which the seventh-day Sabbath serves to strengthen faith is mentioned in Exodus 31:13 and Exodus 20:12, 20. There we're told the Sabbath is designed to remind us that God is the one who sanctifies us. Our sanctification includes not just forgiveness, but the healing of the damage sin has done. It means the harmonious development of our physical, mental and spiritual powers, until the image of God, in which we were originally created, is perfectly restored. The observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is an acknowledgement that only the Creator can perform such a marvelous work of healing and transformation. Just as He created us in the beginning, so He has the power to re-create us now. Surely it is no less a miracle of creation to restore fallen human beings than it was to create them perfect in the

beginning. No wonder David prayed as he did after his sad experience with Bathsheba, “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” Psalm 51:10.

Now some seek to accomplish this transformation by themselves by rigorous obedience, self-discipline and self-denial. The Sabbath comes each week to remind us that only by faith in our Creator can the healing work be done. It’s strange that Sabbath keeping should be thought to be a legalistic act; a denial of true faith. Actually, Sabbath keeping done in the right spirit is a denial of legalism, a denial that we can save ourselves. It’s an acknowledgment that only by faith in the One who created us in the beginning can we possibly be healed and re-created now. And what a perversion it is to suggest that seventh-day Sabbath keeping is legalism; except that we can turn it around that way—and it has been done.

A third way in which the Sabbath serves to remind us of the truth and strengthen our faith in God is mentioned in Hebrews chapter four. There the Sabbath is described as a type and a foretaste of the final rest and restoration to come. Just as God rested from His labors at the end of creation week so there remains a Sabbath-like rest; the Greek says a *‘sabbatismos’*. You can almost hear the meaning of the word.

There remains there a Sabbath-like rest for the people of God. When the children of Israel marched into the land of Canaan, they failed to enter into God’s rest, [the apostle says] because of lack of faith. They possessed the Promised Land but they did not enjoy the Sabbath-like rest that faith brings. [Just remember the book of Judges. Would you call that the Sabbath-like rest? That is not God’s intention.] But those who maintain their faith in Christ may begin to enjoy this rest even in this life and they will enter into it fully when they are admitted to the heavenly Canaan and Eden is restored.

So by keeping holy the seventh-day Sabbath, we acknowledge our anticipation of this Sabbath-like rest to come. We acknowledge our faith in the second coming of Christ and the re-creation of all things.

There are more of course, but these three focuses or purposes of the Sabbath answer the three great questions that have stood in the minds of thinking people—the three great quests of philosophy. Where have we come from? Why are we here? And where do we go after we die?

But mankind has paid a heavy price for neglecting the Sabbath, or substituting another day. For without the Sabbath to provide the answers to the three great questions of life, other solutions have been substituted. Where have we come from? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to remind us that in the beginning Christ created us, room has been left for the substitution of the theory of the evolutionary origin of the human race. Or as others say more scientifically, we don’t know where we’ve come from. Why are we here? How do we attain to the greatest good in life? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to remind us that righteousness and salvation come by faith in Jesus Christ, room has been left for the substitution of the fundamental error of

righteousness by works. Or as others have said more carelessly, we don't know why we're here. So let's eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die! And where do we go after we die? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to point forward to the second coming, to the rewards of faith and the results of sin, room has been left for the substitution of the belief in the natural immortality of the soul. Or as others prefer to say, we don't know where we go after we die. So again, let's eat, drink and be merry.

Incidentally, those three substitute answers—aren't they almost universally held? And not just in Christianity. Belief in the natural immortality of the soul is shared by almost everybody. The idea that salvation comes by works; Ellen White states that is the fundamental error of every false religious system, salvation by works. There are all kinds of substitute explanations as to where we came from that put God in a bad light, or that make of no effect the plan of salvation. But all three of these substitutions wipe out all the significance of the plan of salvation. This is why the seventh-day Sabbath is so vital a part of God's last message to the world. The main difference between the many religions in the world and true Christianity lies in the answers to these three great quests.

We also speak of the seventh-day Sabbath as being the seal of God and we all want to be sealed at the end. In what sense do you understand the seventh-day Sabbath to be the seal of God? In what sense could it be? Would it be possible to be observing the seventh-day Sabbath at the end and be on the wrong side in the great controversy? It's happened before. Is the mere refraining from work from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown evidence that one has the seal of God?

If to be "sealed" means to be so settled into the truth about God, both intellectually and spiritually, that one cannot be moved, then obviously there have been many people who appeared to observe the seventh-day Sabbath who were not settled into the truth. In fact they had accepted the lie. The men who crucified Christ didn't work from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. Would you say they had the seal of God? So in what sense could the seventh-day Sabbath be the seal, do you think? The Sabbath really does sum up this truth about God. It answers the questions about life, and the questions about God; they go right together in a package, don't they? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Faith, Righteousness and Salvation, #13 "Faith and the seventh-day Sabbath", recorded April, 1975, Lynwood, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*
<http://pkp.cc/13MMFRS>

And after all the answers given during crucifixion week, the next day was a rest day, a day for reflection, for remembering, for celebration. **To me, that's the whole purpose of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is designed to remind us of the truth about God that is the basis of our trust.** It's

not a test of obedience. It's not a burden; it's been made one. It was given to man. Remember Mark 2:27? "And he said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; so the Son of man is lord even of the Sabbath.'" The Sabbath was made for us, to help us, because more than at any other time we need to be reminded of the truth that was not claimed, but revealed and demonstrated during creation week, and during crucifixion week.

Incidentally, was that first Sabbath our seventh day? It was our second day. Sometimes we say we should worship every seventh day because it's built into our system that we need to rest every seventh day. If that's a good argument, then on which day should we rest? Which is our seventh day? Thursday! I don't know anybody who chooses Thursday. Friday yes, Saturday yes, Sunday yes. But this would start a whole new movement. If we're supposed to rest on the seventh day, our seventh day is Thursday. God's seventh day, with the universe watching, their seventh day, earth time, is the one that follows all those revealing events of creation week. That's when God and the universe celebrated. And then God says, "I want you to do the same from here on, not to be a burden and a test of obedience—you need this! The controversy is on; you need to be reminded once a week of the evidence I have presented, and there will be much more coming." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Genesis*, recorded 1981, 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/1MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Lou: Someone has asked: "Why did Jesus heal the paralytic on the Sabbath?" Why did Jesus?

Graham: Many of His healings were elective, weren't they? The paralytic had been there thirty-eight years.

Lou: Not a critical emergency.

Graham: Not at all, you see. I think Jesus tried to keep a low profile most of the time. He knew if He became very public, He was so controversial, He wouldn't last very long. And indeed He didn't when He became very conspicuous. But when it came to the Sabbath, He risked His life repeatedly to clear the Sabbath of misunderstanding. Because an arbitrary approach to the Sabbath puts the Father in the worst possible light; and so, to clear this up, He ran the risk of doing healing, and helping on the Sabbath. And He ran into trouble every time. It evidently is that important to redeem the Sabbath of arbitrariness, because the Sabbath speaks so eloquently of God, for good or ill. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #13 with Lou Venden, "How God Treats His Erring Children" 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/13MMCAG>*

As we've considered all along, all God wants in His family is peace and freedom. But to have peace and freedom, there must be mutual love and trust, maturity and self-control. Things like this cannot be commanded, or produced by force or fear. Instead God offers to *set right and keep right* everything that has gone wrong. That means to completely heal the damage done.

That is why when Jesus was here to demonstrate the truth about His Father and the plan of salvation, He spent most of His time healing, rather than preaching. It is not that He underestimated the influence and value of preaching, but there is no more eloquent way to demonstrate and illustrate the truth about God and His government, and what it would mean to set right everything that has gone wrong. He certainly didn't practice the healing arts to attract people to His meetings. When He found people were coming for the wrong reason, He said something that caused most of them to go home.

When Jesus healed the paralytic at the pool, He was preaching by the very way in which He treated that man. It was a demonstration of the truth about God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #14, "God Can Completely Heal the Damage Done" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/14MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

He had come to free the Sabbath from those burdensome requirements that had made it a curse instead of a blessing. {DA 206.1}

For this reason He had chosen the Sabbath upon which to perform the act of healing at Bethesda. He could have healed the sick man as well on any other day of the week; or He might simply have cured him, without bidding him bear away his bed. But this would not have given Him the opportunity He desired. A wise purpose underlay every act of Christ's life on earth. Everything He did was important in itself and in its teaching. Among the afflicted ones at the pool He selected the worst case upon whom to exercise His healing power, and bade the man carry his bed through the city in order to publish the great work that had been wrought upon him. This would raise the question of what it was lawful to do on the Sabbath, and would open the way for Him to denounce the restrictions of the Jews in regard to the Lord's day, and to declare their traditions void. {DA 206.2}

Should God forbid the sun to perform its office upon the Sabbath, cut off its genial rays from warming the earth and nourishing vegetation? Must the system of worlds stand still through

that holy day? Should He command the brooks to stay from watering the fields and forests, and bid the waves of the sea still their ceaseless ebbing and flowing? Must the wheat and corn stop growing, and the ripening cluster defer its purple bloom? Must the trees and flowers put forth no bud nor blossom on the Sabbath? {DA 206.4}

In such a case, men would miss the fruits of the earth, and the blessings that make life desirable. Nature must continue her unvarying course. {DA 207.1}

The Sabbath is a sign of creative and redeeming power; it points to God as the source of life and knowledge; it recalls man's primeval glory, and thus witnesses to God's purpose to re-create us in His own image. {Ed 250.1}

In Christ the character of the Father was revealed. As children looked upon His countenance, they saw purity and goodness shining forth from His eyes. In His countenance gentleness, meekness, love, and conscious power were combined. But though every word, every gesture, every expression of His face, betokened His divine supremacy, humility marked His deportment and bearing. He came but for one purpose, and that was the salvation of the lost. {ML 300.4}

In describing His earthly mission, Jesus said, The Lord "hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. This was His work. He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were revealed in every act of His life; His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man's nature, that He might reach man's wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved to climb upon His knees and gaze into the pensive face, benignant with love. {SC 11.2}

Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, which refused to receive Him, the way, the truth, and the life. They had rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness. His life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save. {SC 12.1}

Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father's heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the

children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God “manifest in the flesh.” 1 Timothy 3:16. {SC 12.2}

The Son of God came to the world as a restorer. He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Every word He uttered was spirit and life. He spoke with authority, conscious of His power to bless humanity, and deliver the captives bound by Satan; conscious also that by His presence He could bring to the world fullness of joy. He longed to help every oppressed and suffering member of the human family, and show that it was His prerogative to bless, not to condemn. {LHU 37.2}

The period of Christ’s personal ministry among men was the time of greatest activity for the forces of the kingdom of darkness. For ages Satan with his evil angels had been seeking to control the bodies and the souls of men, to bring upon them sin and suffering; then he had charged all this misery upon God. Jesus was revealing to men the character of God. He was breaking Satan’s power, and setting his captives free. {DA 257.1}

Varied were the circumstances and needs of those who besought His aid, and none who came to Him went away unhelped. From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole. {MH 17.2}