

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Second Quarter 2015: *The Book of Luke*
Lesson 9 “Jesus, the Master Teacher”

Read for this week’s study

Luke 8:22–25; 4:31–37; 6:20–49; 8:19–21; 10:25–37; Deuteronomy 6:5.

Memory Text

“And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority” (Luke 4:32, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Authority of Jesus
- III. Christ’s Greatest Sermon
- IV. A New Family
- V. Love Defined: The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Part 1
- VI. Love Defined: The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Part 2
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Daniel Duda

1. “Against the backdrop of Jesus’ world we can better understand why Jesus taught the things that He did.” (Sabbath afternoon) See EGW, *Education* pp. 74.75 in the EGW quotes section. To what extent is it important to understand the historical realities of Jesus’ world in order to understand and appreciate His teaching? The pietistic or devotional reading of the Bible is usually concerned with what it means for me, here and now without much thought about what it meant for them, then and there. Why would you say that Jesus was a Master teacher?
2. “As a physician and scholar, Luke was acquainted with the role of authority. He was familiar with the authority of philosophy in Greek scholarship and education. He knew the authority of the Roman law in civil matters and government function. As Paul’s traveling companion he knew the ecclesiastic authority that the apostle commanded with the churches he founded. Thus, Luke understood that authority is at the core of a person’s position, an institution’s role, a state’s function, and a teacher’s relationship to his or her followers. Having rubbed shoulders with all kinds of authority at all levels of power, Luke shared with his readers that there was something matchless about Jesus and His authority.” (Sunday’s lesson)

3. What kind of authority did Jesus have? How was His leadership different from the way the rulers of the day usually exercised their authority? “Born in a carpenter’s home, brought up for 30 years in the little Galilean town of Nazareth, known for nothing great by worldly standards, Jesus confronted everyone—Roman rulers, Jewish scholars, rabbis, ordinary people, secular and religious powers—with His teaching and ministry.” (Sunday’s lesson)
4. “Jesus, through His ministry, had established the uniqueness of His authority. As God in the flesh, He indeed had authority as no one else ever did.” (Sunday’s lesson) How is Jesus’ authority special and unique?
5. “The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7) is often hailed in literature as ‘the essence of Christianity.’ Luke provides selections of the sermon in Luke 6:20–49 and elsewhere.” (Monday’s lesson) Is Luke’s version of the Sermon on the Mount (given on a level place in Luke!) just a watered down compilation of the “true” Sermon from Matthew? What is it about Luke’s Sermon in the Plain that shows that Jesus was a Master teacher?
6. “As presented in Luke 6:20–49, the sermon begins with four blessings and four woes and outlines other essential characteristics of the Christian way.” (Monday’s lesson) When Jesus gave four promises and four warnings, He presented them in terms of Israel’s great scriptural codes. In the book of Deuteronomy there were long lists of ‘blessings’ for those who obeyed the law and ‘curses’ for those who did not. Jesus’ message of promise and warning, of blessing and curse, rang with echoes of the Hebrew prophets of old, and He knew that would provoke opposition from people who liked things the way they were.
7. There are two particularly astonishing things about this sermon: First, the simplicity of instructions: Jesus’ instructions are obvious, clear, direct and memorable. Second, the scarcity of application. How many people do you know who really live like this? How many communities do you know where these guidelines are honored rules of life? Why is this so?
8. “Under the banner of agape love—unmerited, nonexclusive, universal, and sacrificial—Christ created a new family. This family reflects the original, universal, and ideal concept enshrined in the Genesis creation, which attests that every human being is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27) and, therefore, equal before Him.” (...) “The mission and the ministry of Jesus, His forgiving heart and embracing grace, did not exclude anyone but included all who would accept His call. His everlasting love brought Him in touch with the entire spectrum of society.” (Tuesday’s lesson) What are the implications for people who want to belong to such a community in today’s society? As followers of Jesus, are we modeling this type of new family?
9. The last two days of the lesson concentrate on the parable of the Good Samaritan which “shows us the horizontal dimension [of love]—the kind of love that should characterize human life, refusing to acknowledge any barrier between humans but

living instead within Jesus' definition of a 'neighbor': that all human beings are children of God, and deserve to be loved and treated equally." (Wednesday's lesson)

10. "The priest and the Levite asked themselves the question: What would happen to us if we stopped and helped this man? The Samaritan asked: What would happen to this man if I didn't help him? What is the difference between the two?" (Thursday's lesson) Because the unfortunate traveler was left half-dead, it was important for the priest and Levite, as Temple officials, not to become impure by touching a corpse, so they reasoned that it was better that they remain aloof, preserving their purity at the cost of their obedience to God's law of love.
11. Is it possible that we too might use the God-given revelation of love and grace as a way of boosting our own sense of isolated security and purity—instead of seeing it as a call and challenge to extend God's love and grace to the whole world?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: Well, in this connection someone has already asked: "How can you really have a conversation about God? After all, how can we really know God? Take Paul's statement in Romans 3:11: 'How unsearchable are His judgments. How inscrutable are His ways,' the *Revised Standard Version* translates it. If that's the case, who are we to question? God is sovereign, so why should we be sitting here having conversations about God?"

Graham: Ah, who are we to question the inscrutable ways of God? And that's in Romans. But I notice in Romans 1, Paul says, "You're without excuse if you don't know God." So on the principle of taking the Bible as a whole, and not "here a little and there a little", I would have to put Romans 1 alongside Romans 9 and the other places.

I think when he's saying God's thoughts are so far above ours that is a reverent recognition that God is infinite. Think of all He knows! We'll never fully understand God; we're mere creatures. And at times we need to be reminded of His infinite superiority. But then it's marvelous that the Infinite One would *want* to be known.

All through the Bible He says, "Israel is destroyed because they don't know me." And, "I've come to this earth that you may know me." So it's pretty clear God wants to be known. But we shouldn't pretend we're gods who could know everything that He knows.

Lou: So we ought not to use that idea of God's sovereignty, and so on, as an excuse to not think about Him.

Graham: Yes, and I think where that really comes from is Romans 9, where you have the verse, "Who are you to question God? Who are you to answer back to God?"

And Romans 9, I believe, has been misunderstood by some very saintly people including a notable theologian in reformation days. One needs to really put Romans 9 in the whole context of Romans —certainly in the context of chapters 1 through 9.

In Romans 1-8, Paul has been saying to his audience (which is made up of both Jews and Gentiles), “I have great good news for you. God will save all who trust Him—whether you are Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female. He’ll save everybody who trusts Him.”

And as Paul was developing chapters 1-8, he could sense that certain members of his audience (descended from Abraham) were not taking this too kindly, because they thought that they had a *special relationship* with God. You know, God almost had made a deal with their ancestor. And that’s why they were so concerned with their genealogy and other matters. And when Paul got to the end of chapter 8, he sensed that some in his audience were quite offended. So he turned to them and said, “I sense that some of you don’t like what I’ve said, that God is the kind of God that would save all who trust Him. I want to know, (you people who object to this) are you suggesting you would run the universe better than God? Are you saying God cannot save all who trust Him? Let me tell you something: God is going to run this universe precisely as He wishes. Just as the potter takes a lump of clay, and makes of the same clay a vessel for honor, and a vessel for dishonor, so God has the right—if He will exercise it—to run His universe any way He likes!”

Now some people will take that out of context and say, “God takes the material we are all made of and makes some to be saved and some to be lost. So, what’s the use of trying to know Him at all? Our destiny has already been determined.”

No, what Paul is saying there is that God has just as much authority as the potter—more so. He created this universe. He’s going to run it precisely as He wishes. And He won’t ever change. You can count on it. You say that sounds arbitrary? “No, I’ve been telling you in chapters 1-8 how He runs the universe. So infinitely gracious that He values nothing higher than our freedom, and will save all who trust Him, but doesn’t expect us to trust Him as a stranger, and so at infinite cost He has revealed the truth about Himself. And that’s what you don’t like, isn’t it, audience.” So he really is saying, “You impudent, irreverent people. How dare you tell God how to run His universe!”

How *does* He run the universe? Please read Romans 1-8. Infinitely graciously. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #1 with Lou Venden, “The Conflict In God’s Family” recorded January, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/1MMCAG>*

Then look at the extraordinary story told in 1 Kings 13. It’s a whole chapter. I wish there was time to retell it; it’s so dramatic. About this younger prophet called the “man of God,” who was

told by God to deliver a message to the king, not to accept hospitality, but to come home by another route. But on the way an older prophet heard of what had happened. And he asked his sons to saddle his donkey and he got on it and chased after the man of God. When he caught up with him, as it says on the Bible Reference Sheet:

The old prophet said to him, “Come home with me and eat bread.” And he (the man of God) said, “I may not return with you, or go in with you; neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place; for it was said to me by the word of the Lord, ‘You shall neither eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by the way that you came,’ And he said to him, “I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying ‘Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water.’ But he lied to him. (RSV)

And you remember that the younger prophet believed the older prophet, and he went home and ate with him. And as he proceeded on his way he was met by a lion that slew him. If you don’t know the story you ought to read it. But that warns us that people who make claims that God has spoken through them may be lying to us. And it’s God Himself who warns us of that.

But the most impressive illustration of how God seeks to convince us—not on authority and power, but on the basis of truth—was provided by Jesus Himself on the road to Emmaus. And that’s described in Luke 24, on the Bible Reference Sheet. I wish we could read the whole story:

But while they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him [They didn’t know Christ was walking with them]. And he said to them, “What is this conversation which you are holding” [You see, they were having a conversation about God (as we are) on the road to Emmaus]? And they stood still, looking sad. . . . And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. Later, when he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him. (RSV)

Why did He not reveal who He was at the beginning, and say, “What are your questions? You know that I will give you authoritative answers, and I will expect you to believe them.” He did not reveal who He was until He had led them to an intelligent confidence based on the unquestionable evidence of scripture. Then He revealed who He was. If the Infinite One will do that, how dare we presume to take any shortcuts? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #4, “God’s Way Of Restoring Trust” recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/4MMCAG>*

Lou: Was there not enough evidence in Old Testament times for people to recognize God's true character, or did they have to wait for the New Testament to understand?

Graham: Oh, I like that very much. Yes. There was an organization a while ago in Minneapolis, Minnesota, that taught that the God of the Old Testament was Beelzebub and the God of the New Testament was Christ. And they contrasted the Old with the New. But when you read all the way through, the picture of God in the Old Testament is the same as in the New. It's the same God, the same Spirit communicating, the same Christ leading them in the wilderness. What impresses me in the Old Testament is how well people did know Him. His best friends in the Bible are in the Old Testament. The man that Paul uses to suggest what God wants most in us was Abraham, in the Old Testament. And Moses is called a friend of God. And look at Job, Hosea, and Amos, and the others, Jeremiah, Isaiah. Apparently the message in the Old Testament is that clear. In fact, Jesus grew up with it and learned the truth about His Father. So I think the Old Testament is magnificently clear but when it is read as a whole. I find no break between the Old and the New, except that now Christ is here in human form to give confirmation to everything that has been described and anticipated in the Old. Even His Sermon on the Mount; it's all in the Old Testament, already there. So the Bible is a unit, the whole thing, all sixty-six books. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #6 with Lou Venden, "Evaluating the Evidence" recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/6MMCAG>

Jesus said on the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the meek." Not blessed are the weak, but blessed are the meek. Meekness is not weakness, though it is so widely misunderstood that way. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Because, you see, only the meek, only the gentle, would be safe to admit to the kingdom, the kind of kingdom that will be governed the way Jesus exercised His authority and power during those three and a half years.

Or do you think He will change His methods in the hereafter? He thundered many times in the Old Testament. Those were all emergency measures. For three and a half precious years, He ran His kingdom on this planet the way He will for eternity. It didn't work, did it? It worked for a few. It worked with the meek. They loved it. And the poor people heard Him gladly. But most people did not appreciate this kind of government. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.

Which raises the question with us—which kind of government do we prefer? Under which kind of government do we feel most secure, a powerful tyranny or the gentle exercise of authority and power that Jesus demonstrated for three and a half years? Obviously it would not be safe to admit people who do not respect the authority of truth spoken softly in love. Blessed indeed

are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #7 with Lou Venden, “The Question Of Authority” recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/7MMCAG>

But can you imagine Jesus saying, “Blessed are you poor.” And they said, “What do you mean, we are blessed?” We are poor because we are bad. Because if we were good, we would be blessed, and if we were blessed we would be rich. So “Blessed are you poor,” “Happy are you poor?” That made no sense at all. You see His audience was more inclined to go with the three friends who came to Job. They preferred that theology. Jesus was siding more with Job.

Can you imagine the reaction in the audience when Jesus would say, “Happy and blessed are you poor”. Because, you see, the poor knew they were bad, and recognized their spiritual need. And that’s where Luke and Matthew do come together. You see, they really are saying the same thing, because of their interpretation of poverty. If you were poor, you knew you were in need. You were not a good person, or you would be blessed. So Luke and Matthew are using different words and saying the same thing, “Blessed and happy are you who recognize your spiritual need.” {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Intertestament period & Matthew, recorded March, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/51MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/52MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

COMMENT: Who is our brother?

That’s a good question! Because that was asked of Jesus, you remember. “Who is my neighbor? Who is my brother?” And His answer was to tell the story of the Good Samaritan. Now, who is our brother? Anybody in need. Anyone else created in the image of God. Everybody. The angels are our brothers. Everybody else is our brother.

Are only good people our brothers? We’ve discussed this before. Are only good children members of the family? Is this the way you report the number of children you have? It depends on the latest check into their virtue. You have six children, and currently four are good, so you say, “I have four children this week.” Next week, “I have five.” Next week you have only two. No, we own up to all our children, don’t we? God owns up to all His children. Lucifer is one of His children. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – , 2, & 3 John & Jude, recorded August, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/77MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/78MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

When Christ came to the earth, humanity seemed to be fast reaching its lowest point. The very foundations of society were undermined. Life had become false and artificial. . . . Disgusted with fable and falsehood, seeking to drown thought, men turned to infidelity and materialism. Leaving eternity out of their reckoning, they lived for the present. {Ed 74.4}

As they ceased to recognize the Divine, they ceased to regard the human. Truth, honor, integrity, confidence, compassion, were departing from the earth. Relentless greed and absorbing ambition gave birth to universal distrust. The idea of duty, of the obligation of strength to weakness, of human dignity and human rights, was cast aside as a dream or a fable. The common people were regarded as beasts of burden or as the tools and the steppingstones for ambition. Wealth and power, ease and self-indulgence, were sought as the highest good. Physical degeneracy, mental stupor, spiritual death, characterized the age. {Ed 75.1}

Truths which had been lost sight of, which had been misplaced, misinterpreted, and disconnected from their pure position, He separated from the companionship of error; and showing them as precious jewels in their own bright luster, He reset them in their proper framework, and commanded them to stand fast forever. What a work was this! It was of such a character that no finite man could comprehend or do it. Only the divine Hand could take the truth which, from its connection with error, had been serving the cause of the enemy of God and man, and place it where it would glorify God, and be the salvation of humanity. The work of Christ was to give again to the world the truth in its original freshness and beauty. He represented the spiritual and the heavenly, by the things of nature and experience. He gave fresh manna to the hungry soul, presented a new kingdom which was to be set up among men. {FE 236.3}

Christ reached the people where they were. He presented the plain truth to their minds in the most forcible, simple language. The humble poor, the most unlearned, could comprehend, through faith in Him, the most exalted truths. No one needed to consult the learned doctors as to His meaning. He did not perplex the ignorant with mysterious inferences, or use unaccustomed and learned words, of which they had no knowledge. The greatest Teacher the world has ever known, was the most definite, simple, and practical in His instruction. {GW 49.3}

Jesus, the divine Teacher, assured His disciples of His love toward them. He assumed human nature for no other purpose than to display to men the mercy, the love, and the goodness of God in providing for the salvation and happiness of His creatures. It was for this end that He died. While uttering His tenderest words of sympathy, He rejoiced in the consciousness that He intended to do "exceeding abundantly," above what they were able to ask or think. Daily He exhibited before them, in works of blessing to man, how great was His tenderness and love to the fallen race. His heart was a fountain of inexhaustible compassion, from which the longing heart could be supplied with the water of life. {CSW 108.2}

Christ was the greatest teacher the world has ever known. He came to this earth to shed abroad the bright beams of truth, that men might gain a fitness for heaven. "For this cause came I into the world," He declared, "that I should bear witness unto the truth." John 18:37. He came to reveal the character of the Father, that men might be led to worship Him in spirit and in truth. {CT 259.1}

Man's need for a divine teacher was known in heaven. The pity and sympathy of God were aroused in behalf of human beings, fallen and bound to Satan's chariot car; and when the fullness of time was come, He sent forth His Son. The One appointed in the councils of heaven came to this earth as man's instructor. The rich benevolence of God gave Him to our world, and to meet the necessities of human nature He took humanity upon Himself. To the astonishment of the heavenly host the eternal Word came to this world as a helpless babe. Fully prepared, He left the royal courts and mysteriously allied Himself with fallen human beings. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14. {CT 259.2}

When Christ left His high command, He might have taken upon Him any condition in life that He chose. But greatness and rank were nothing to Him, and He chose the most humble walk of life. No luxury, ease, or self-gratification came into His experience. The truth of heavenly origin was to be His theme; He was to sow the world with truth, and He lived in such a way as to be accessible to all. {CT 259.3}

Christ's work was to restore man to his original state, to heal him, through divine power, from the wounds and bruises made by sin. {FE 430.2}

Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love not only those who loved them, but those who hated them, who treated them despitefully. In this He was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted His teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul. {FE 177.1}

In the Teacher sent from God, heaven gave to men its best and greatest. He who had stood in the councils of the Most High, who had dwelt in the innermost sanctuary of the Eternal, was the One chosen to reveal in person to humanity the knowledge of God. {Ed 73.2}

There was but one hope for the human race—that into this mass of discordant and corrupting elements might be cast a new leaven; that there might be brought to mankind the power of a new life; that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world. {Ed 76.1}

Christ came to restore this knowledge. He came to set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness. {Ed 76.2}

Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity. Sweeping away the exactions which had encumbered the law of God, He showed that the law is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the happiness of mankind, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society. {Ed 76.3}

So far from making arbitrary requirements, God's law is given to men as a hedge, a shield. Whoever accepts its principles is preserved from evil. Fidelity to God involves fidelity to man. Thus the law guards the rights, the individuality, of every human being. It restrains the superior from oppression, and the subordinate from disobedience. It ensures man's well-being, both for this world and for the world to come. To the obedient it is the pledge of eternal life, for it expresses the principles that endure forever. {Ed 76.4}

Christ came to demonstrate the value of the divine principles by revealing their power for the regeneration of humanity. He came to teach how these principles are to be developed and applied. {Ed 77.1}

In every human being He discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace—in "the beauty of the Lord our God." Psalm 90:17. Looking upon them with hope, He inspired hope. Meeting them with confidence, He inspired trust. Revealing in Himself man's true ideal, He awakened, for its attainment, both desire and faith. In His presence souls despised and fallen realized that they still were men, and they longed to prove themselves worthy of His regard. In many a heart that seemed dead to all things holy, were awakened new impulses. To many a despairing one there opened the possibility of a new life. {Ed 80.1}

Christ bound them to His heart by the ties of love and devotion; and by the same ties He bound them to their fellow men. With Him love was life, and life was service. "Freely ye have received," He said, "freely give." Matthew 10:8. {Ed 80.2}

Christ's teaching, like His sympathies, embraced the world. Never can there be a circumstance of life, a crisis in human experience, which has not been anticipated in His teaching, and for which its principles have not a lesson. The Prince of teachers, His words will be found a guide to His co-workers till the end of time. {Ed 81.4}

To Him the present and the future, the near and the far, were one. He had in view the needs of all mankind. Before His mind's eye was outspread every scene of human effort and achievement, of temptation and conflict, of perplexity and peril. All hearts, all homes, all pleasures and joys and aspirations, were known to Him. {Ed 82.1}

He spoke not only for, but to, all mankind. To the little child, in the gladness of life's morning; to the eager, restless heart of youth; to men in the strength of their years, bearing the burden of responsibility and care; to the aged in their weakness and weariness,—to all, His message was spoken,—to every child of humanity, in every land and in every age. {Ed 82.2}

To Him nothing was without purpose. The sports of the child, the toils of the man, life's pleasures and cares and pains, all were means to the end—the revelation of God for the uplifting of humanity. {Ed 82.5}

From His lips the word of God came home to men's hearts with new power and new meaning. His teaching caused the things of creation to stand out in new light. Upon the face of nature once more rested gleamings of that brightness which sin had banished. In all the facts and experiences of life were revealed a divine lesson and the possibility of divine companionship. Again God dwelt on earth; human hearts became conscious of His presence; the world was encompassed with His love. Heaven came down to men. In Christ their hearts acknowledged Him who opened to them the science of eternity— {Ed 82.6}

“Immanuel, . . . God with us.” {Ed 83.1}

Jesus desired to awaken inquiry. He sought to arouse the careless, and impress truth upon the heart. Parable teaching was popular, and commanded the respect and attention, not only of the Jews, but of the people of other nations. No more effective method of instruction could He have employed. If His hearers had desired a knowledge of divine things, they might have understood His words; for He was always willing to explain them to the honest inquirer. {COL 20.3}

Again, Christ had truths to present which the people were unprepared to accept or even to understand. For this reason also He taught them in parables. By connecting His teaching with the scenes of life, experience, or nature, He secured their attention and impressed their hearts. Afterward, as they looked upon the objects that illustrated His lessons, they recalled the words of the divine Teacher. To minds that were open to the Holy Spirit, the significance of the Saviour's teaching unfolded more and more. Mysteries grew clear, and that which had been hard to grasp became evident. {COL 21.1}

Jesus sought an avenue to every heart. By using a variety of illustrations, He not only presented truth in its different phases, but appealed to the different hearers. Their interest was aroused by figures drawn from the surroundings of their daily life. None who listened to the Saviour could feel that they were neglected or forgotten. The humblest, the most sinful, heard in His teaching a voice that spoke to them in sympathy and tenderness. {COL 21.2}

Christ did not deal in abstract theories, but in that which is essential to the development of character, that which will enlarge man's capacity for knowing God, and increase his efficiency to do good. He spoke to men of those truths that relate to the conduct of life, and that take hold upon eternity. {COL 23.1}

Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family; He bids them call His Father their Father. They are His "little ones," dear to the heart of God, bound to Him by the most tender and abiding ties. He has toward them an exceeding tenderness, as far surpassing what our father or mother has felt toward us in our helplessness as the divine is above the human. {DA 327.2}

Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by *trying* to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance. {COL 384.2}

Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's circle the poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise. {COL 386.2}

In the story of the good Samaritan, Jesus gave a picture of Himself and His mission. Man had been deceived, bruised, robbed, and ruined by Satan, and left to perish; but the Saviour had compassion on our helpless condition. He left His glory, to come to our rescue. He found us ready to die, and He undertook our case. He healed our wounds. He covered us with His robe of righteousness. He opened to us a refuge of safety, and made complete provision for us at His own charges. He died to redeem us. Pointing to His own example, He says to His followers, "These things I command you, that ye love one another." "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 15:17; 13:34. {DA 503.6}