

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Second Quarter 2017: *"Feed My Sheep": 1 and 2 Peter*

Lesson 5 "Living for God"

Read for this week's study

1 Peter 3:8–12; Galatians 2:20; 1 Peter 4:1, 2; Romans 6:1–11; 1 Peter 4:3–11; 2 Samuel 11:4.

Memory Text

"For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil." (1 Peter 3:12, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Being of "One Mind"
- III. To Suffer in the Flesh
- IV. Born Again
- V. Sins of the Flesh
- VI. Love Covers All
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. The first section of Peter's letter (1:1-2:10) dealt with God's grace and salvation showing its consequences – living in hope (1:1-12); living in holiness (1:13-21); living in harmony (1:22-2:10).
2. The second part (2:11-3:12) deals with God's grace and submission. The Apostle Peter applied the theme of submission to the life of a believer as a citizen (2:11-17); a worker (2:18-25); a marriage partner (3:1-7) and a member of the Christian assembly (3:8-12) thus dealing with submitting to authorities, to masters, submitting in the home and in the church.
3. In this lesson, we will discuss the last one – that's why Peter starts with the word "finally" (3:8). We will see how we can cultivate Christian love in the church.
4. "This week, Peter continues on this same track: the kind of new life that Christians will have in Christ after they have given themselves to Him and have been baptized. In fact, the change will be so great that others will notice it." (Sabbath afternoon)
5. What does it mean when Peter tells them all to be of "one mind" (3:8)? How is unity different from uniformity? Why is it that we are easily drawn to uniformity and

creating unity is so threatening and difficult? “Unity does not mean uniformity; it means cooperation in the midst of diversity.”

6. In 3:18-22 Peter warns his readers to expect suffering (the whole next lesson will be devoted to suffering for Christ). He has already said that this may be inflicted by the authorities, even if in fact the Christians have done nothing to deserve it. Peter has already pointed out that this innocent suffering puts the Messiah’s people in the place where the Messiah himself had been, the victim of the worst injustice of all.
7. But by his suffering and death, Jesus achieved and announced God’s victory over all ‘authorities’ past, present, those in heavenly places and everywhere. That’s why the passage ends with an emphatic claim that Jesus, through his ascension into heaven now has ‘angels, authorities, and powers subject to him’ (3:22).
8. Writing to people in ancient Turkey (where there was a widespread belief that Noah’s ark came to rest on a mountain in that region), Peter connects Noah’s ministry and the ark with baptism. These persecuted little Christian communities are compared by their baptism, to the Messiah in his victory because it shapes the confrontation that takes place between these communities and the watching world.
9. They can hold their heads up, keep their conscience clear and trust that God’s victory will be played out in the world and all spiritual powers responsible for wickedness and corruption will be defeated.
10. The last section of our lesson (4:1-11) deals with transformed living and describes four attitudes that Christians can cultivate in their lifetime (‘rest of his time’) if they desire to make their life all that God wants it to be: A radical attitude toward sin (4:1-3); a patient attitude toward the lost (4:4-6) an expectant attitude toward Christ’s coming (4:7) and a fervent attitude toward the saints (4:8-11).
11. Why is sober-mindedness (v. 7) so important as we wait for Christ’s return? Why does susceptibility to wild thinking, frenzy, or madness do more harm than good? “The end of all things is upon us” (3:7) does not mean that we should give way to fanciful calculations or interpretations. It means that in Jesus, God has already begun the process of cosmic renewal, whose sign and foretaste is the renewal of human lives through sharing Jesus’ death and resurrection. It is important to study prophecies, yet to remain balanced and alert. Is it possible to lose sound judgment if we are too sure of our private interpretations?
12. What does it mean that “love covers a multitude of sins” (Proverbs 10:12; 1 Peter 4:8)? It cannot mean that love is engaged in a “cover up” operation, hiding things that we would rather not face. The gift of love actually transforms the situation so that the “multitude of sins” which were there before are no longer relevant. They are forgiven, people are reconciled. Instead of squabbling and fighting, the community can live and work together! It is true that in human relations many things can and do go wrong. But there is no need to despair or return to old pagan ways of life. Learning a new habit of love will provide the solution.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

What does it mean to “deal with sin”? If sin is distrust and its consequences, forgiveness alone will not heal the damage done. Forgiveness does not do away with sin. For there to be lasting peace in God’s universe, trust must somehow be restored. Questions must be answered.

Satan’s accusations must be met. And God must be seen to be righteous, and infinitely worthy of our trust. And so Christ came to set things right. And that’s why he died; and we’ll spend a whole evening considering it. Look at Romans 5:1: “Now that we have been put right with God by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (GNB)

Put right; or set right. Do you know what the Greek word is behind that? It’s the word that’s usually translated “justified.” I love the translation “put right”; and we’ll consider that more, later on. There are at least three ways of looking at what went wrong in God’s universe. I would like to mention these as a basis for our continuing discussion. And God looks different in these three ways.

A very widely held view, held beyond the bounds of Christianity, is this: Because we have broken God’s rules, we have offended him. And he’s very angry with us. Can anything be done to assuage his anger and appease his wrath—so that somehow he can find it in his heart to forgive us, and not destroy us, and bless us once again?

There is another view that’s widely held, sometimes within the bounds of Christianity: We have broken God’s rules, and thus we are in serious legal trouble. Law and justice demand that God should destroy us, or even torture us for eternity. Can anything be done to make it legally possible for God to forgive us, and not destroy us, and still be *just*; to appear to be just in his own eyes, and in the eyes of the onlooking universe?

Then there’s a third view, not widely held on this planet. But I believe that this is the most widely held view throughout the universe. If it isn’t, God has not won the war, and there is no basis for lasting peace. That’s this view: We have sinned. We have allowed ourselves to be deceived by Satan’s lies. And so we have turned away from the true God to many substitutes. And the results have been disastrous. Left alone we all would die. Is there any way that Satan’s lies can be corrected? Is there any way that the truth about God and his government can be made crystal clear?

Is there any way that unquestionable evidence can be provided, that God is not the kind of person his enemies have made him out to be—and so some of us rebels may be won back to trust, and so be saved and healed? For God can and will save all who trust him. That’s why all God asks of us is trust.

Could I ask you which one of these three views you prefer? Which one of these gods do you prefer? Which one would you rather live with for eternity? Or does it really make any difference? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #2,

“What Went Wrong in God’s Universe?” 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/2MMCAG>

Imagine living in a community where everyone lives as described in the Ten Commandments! That means everybody loves God and everybody loves everybody else; which means that no one is ever rude or arrogant, or impatient. No one insists on having his own way. Can you imagine living in such a community? Would you be free?

Then you go down to the details of the Decalogue. No one ever steals. No one ever kills. No one ever hates. No one ever lies. Everyone can be trusted. And even more than that, look at number ten. People not only never do anything wrong—no one ever *wants* to. That’s the meaning of number ten, the one that bothered Paul so much at first. He thought God was interfering too much when he got in that deep. And finally, Paul said that *that* is what really guarantees our freedom. We will live in a place where people not only never do anything wrong, they will never even want to. That means they have really been healed.

And more than that, according to the first commandment, everyone loves and reveres the same God. What kind of a God do they worship and admire? Every member of God’s family will admire the God who values nothing higher than the freedom of his children and who has paid such a price to prove it. They will worship a God who asks for nothing more than mutual love and trust. That produces a unity that is inherent in our faith and the fact that we all love and worship the same God. When you have a group of people who live like that, you have real freedom, real peace, and real security. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #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>

Some seem to find it disappointing, even offensive, to learn that Christ did not die primarily for them. But unless God wins this war and reestablishes peace in his family, our salvation is meaningless. Who would want to live for eternity in a warring universe?

Without this larger understanding of a conflict that has involved the universe, it’s hard to understand Paul’s explanation that Jesus shed his blood to bring peace, reconciliation, and unity to God’s children in heaven as well as on earth. But recognition of the war and its issues helps one to take a larger view of the cross and of the plan of salvation and atonement.

The kind of unity God desires cannot be commanded or produced by force or fear. In the course of human history, many tyrants have tried to maintain unity by terror and brutality. But that

kind of at-one-ment does not last. Look at what has happened in a number of countries just in recent years.

The kind of at-one-ment God desires is described in the New Testament as a unity that is “inherent in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God.”(Ephesians 4:13, REB) People who love and trust the same Jesus and the same God are naturally attracted to each other. The same truth about God that sets them free from tyranny and fear binds them together in the firmest kind of unity. Friends of a friendly God enjoy at-one-ment with each other. {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends*, 164-165. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.}

<http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter12.html>

It's the same way with “covered.” Think what we've done with the word “covered” to suggest that I as a sinner—and we are all sinners—I stand in the presence of the Father, and he would be very angry with me and destructive toward me if I were not covered. So I am covered with something; and fortunately God does not have twenty/twenty vision. He doesn't know the truth. I know what's inside. The Lord knows what's inside. My guardian angel knows what's inside. And the devil is reminding them as the accuser of the brethren as to what's inside. But the Father looks and I'm perfect.

He knows better. God knows exactly what I'm like. What does that mean in the legal model? You can see how it could have an emergency comforting message for people who are afraid of God. Don't worry. God can't really see you the way you are. That's emergency talk.

In the trust-healing model, God looks at me and knows exactly what I'm like; but nevertheless, he treats me as if I had been as loyal as his own Son.

He treats me as if I had lived as righteously as Christ. I know I haven't and so does he. But that's how generous he is. Now, that's for real. And that's more marvelous than the other. So we could use those phrases, but when we do, if the audience is ready, we should explain in the healing model. That language has its place, but as I think you said once before, it's a way station on the way. {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>

Question from the audience: What does the cross have to do with the saving power? What does the cross have to do with saving these strict, obedient church members that don't realize the friendship role?

Graham: Well hopefully that will come up early because I think our evangelists have always been right in saying, “Let us go and stand at the foot of the cross.” Not that everyone goes away with the same understanding. Some leave the cross saying, “Thank you for paying my bill.” And some even go off and indulge themselves afterwards and believe they’re paid up—as long as they confess regularly, they’re paid up. They’re covered with the blood. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, *We’ve Camped Around This Mountain Long Enough*, #7, recorded July, 1989, South Dakota Conference Ministers Meeting} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/7MMCAMPED>*

Lou: I want to move to some other questions that have come up that will help us to draw on earlier meetings as well. Someone in our congregation would like to know the meaning of the statement, “You must be born again.” (John 3:4, 9) That is a familiar question! “I’m a born-again Christian.” What does that mean?

Graham: Nicodemus even asked what it meant. And Jesus said, “That should be pretty clear, if you’ve read the fifty-first Psalm and other places.” To be changed from a rebel to someone who can be trusted, to be changed from a stubborn person (who is unwilling to listen), to someone who loves, trusts, and admires God and doesn’t want to miss a single word—that is like being born all over again. And that’s why Jesus used such a dramatic picture.

Now, that’s also the meaning of being converted. You know, you turn around and go the other way like driving a car. So, to be converted means to *turn around and go the other way*. Now I’m stubborn and rebellious—now I’m humbly willing to listen, love, trust, and admire. And one picture of this change is being born again. I think that Jesus was chiding Nicodemus for being a little slow to pick up something that he should have known. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #3 with Lou Venden, “All God Asks Is Trust” 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/3MMCAG>*

You remember Nicodemus’ comment. He thought that was almost too much. That is how great the change is. That’s why Paul interpreted baptism the way he did. He said baptism by immersion most appropriately symbolizes how great is this change. Look at the familiar verse in Romans 6:4: “By our baptism we were buried with him in death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father’s glorious power, we also should live an entirely new life.” (Weymouth)

You can see why baptism by immersion represents this best. Besides, that is the meaning of the word “baptize.” That word is even used for washing the dishes in the Bible. It doesn’t do much good just to sprinkle them a little—though our children might try that short cut sometimes. The

word means to dip, to immerse. And I thought I should include how this was recognized by members of other churches, particularly scholars in the Roman Catholic Church. Do you see right underneath, where it says Romans 6:3 and 4 footnote? Before we read it, do you see the names at the end, Kleist and Lilly? Lilly is a Roman Catholic priest. Kleist is a Jesuit monsignor. Good scholars. Beautiful translation! This is their footnote in a Roman Catholic New Testament:

St. Paul alludes to the manner in which baptism was ordinarily conferred in the primitive Church, by immersion. [Why? Because] The descent into the water is suggestive of the descent of the body into the grave, and the ascent is suggestive of the resurrection to a new life.

Could it be said much better than that? That is why many Christians still symbolize the newness of this experience, the beginning of the healing, by baptism by immersion. Of course, at this stage, the Christian is just a beginner. Paul calls him a babe in the truth, who needs a great deal of protection. Yet even at that beginning stage, God treats us as if we had never sinned, as if we had always been His loyal children. {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>*

Do we need to fear how Jesus will treat us in the hereafter, if he would treat Simon that way? Look at how Jesus treated even people who couldn't be saved, and who did not become his followers. Look at those Pharisees who brought that poor woman. Look how he treated them. How did he treat Judas? You remember when Judas went to betray his Lord? Jesus had so covered for him that the other disciples thought he'd gone to make an offering to feed the poor. Now, that's how Jesus covered for Judas. And there are many more stories like this. This is the clearest evidence the universe will ever see, or ever need, as to the kind of person our God is. And what I like is, it's not so much in words as it is a description. It's stories. That's why it's such a shame to collect the key texts, the statements, and skip the stories, assuming "the stories are for the children." The stories are the evidence. The recounting of the story of the woman taken in adultery, the story in the upper room, and the story here of the woman who anointed his feet. It's the stories that are such compelling evidence, and based on that evidence, we have the statements that God is love, and so on.

That statement that God is love doesn't mean too much apart from stories like this. Love covers a multitude of sins, and so on, it says. Well, watch him do it! We can count on it. In the hereafter, we have no need to fear the infinite memory of God. However, it does also mean that no one could be safely admitted to the hereafter who could not be entrusted with the memory of other people's sins, and treat them with all due respect. Because some day we may

run into Rahab. Can you see some people say, “Hey! I’ve been wanting to meet you for a long time. What was it like before you straightened out your life?” You know, she was a prostitute once. Can you see how we could make people uncomfortable in the hereafter?

Or seeing David, and reminding him of his sins. You can just see David and Uriah and Bathsheba and Solomon meeting. That’s a collision! Because by the time the introductions are over, everybody is going to know who everybody is. There’s no other way you can do that without letting people know the truth. Or maybe they just don’t know who anybody is in the hereafter? Of course we know who everyone is, and we are made up of our lives. And Uriah is going to find out that that remarkable boy is not his son, but was David’s son. It’s going to be very, very awkward. And so truly, God cannot save anyone who cannot be entrusted with the memory of other people’s sins; and who, in spite of all that, will treat fellow sinners with all due dignity and respect, as God has done himself. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Intertestament Period and 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)

Recommended further study:

“Why Did Jesus Have To Die?”, Graham Maxwell Interview (*Graham Maxwell and Pine Knoll Publications*– 1990) [Why Did Jesus Have to Die \(PDF\)](#)

Further Study with Ellen White

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}

The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit, have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. (RH April 12, 1892). {6BC 1101.1}

The power of truth is to transform heart and character. Its effect is not like a dash of color here and there upon the canvas; the whole character is to be transformed, the image of Christ is to be revealed in words and actions. A new nature is imparted. Man is renewed after the image of Christ in righteousness and true holiness. . . . (Letter 2a, 1892). {6BC 1117.15}

In this last meeting with His disciples, the great desire which Christ expressed for them was that they might love one another as He had loved them. Again and again He spoke of this. "These things I command you," He said repeatedly, "that ye love one another." His very first injunction when alone with them in the upper chamber was, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." To the disciples this commandment was new; for they had not loved one another as Christ had loved them. He saw that new ideas and impulses must control them; that new principles must be practiced by them; through His life and death they were to receive a new conception of love. The command to love one another had a new meaning in the light of His self-sacrifice. The whole work of grace is one continual service of love, of self-denying, self-sacrificing effort. During every hour of Christ's sojourn upon the earth, the love of God was flowing from Him in irrepressible streams. All who are imbued with His Spirit will love as He loved. The very principle that actuated Christ will actuate them in all their dealing one with another. {DA 677.2}

This love is the evidence of their discipleship. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples," said Jesus, "if ye have love one to another." When men are bound together, not by force or self-interest, but by love, they show the working of an influence that is above every human influence. Where this oneness exists, it is evidence that the image of God is being restored in humanity, that a new principle of life has been implanted. It shows that there is power in the divine nature to withstand the supernatural agencies of evil, and that the grace of God subdues the selfishness inherent in the natural heart. {DA 678.1}

The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. In mind, in purpose, in character, they are one, but not in person. By partaking of the Spirit of God, conforming to the law of God, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ brings His disciples into a living union with Himself and with the Father. Through the working of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind, man is made complete in Christ Jesus. Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin (MS 111, 1903). {5BC 1148.3}

God wishes us to have the mastery over ourselves. But He cannot help us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the powers and faculties given to man. Of ourselves, we are not able to bring the purposes and desires and inclinations into harmony with the will of God; but if we are "willing to be made willing," the Saviour will accomplish this for us, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5. {AA 482.3}

The Christian's warfare is not a warfare waged against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The Christian must contend with

supernatural forces, but he is not to be left alone to engage in the conflict. The Saviour is the captain of his salvation, and with Him man may be more than conqueror. {FW 92.3}

God has given us every facility, every grace. He has provided the riches of heaven's treasure, and it is our privilege to draw continually from this capital. {AG 235.6}

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, or a day. It is a continual growth in grace. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. Satan lives, and is active, and every day we need to cry earnestly to God for help and strength to resist him. As long as Satan reigns we shall have self to subdue, besetments to overcome, and there is no stopping place, there is no point to which we can come and say we have fully attained. {1T 340.2}

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}

The sanctification of the soul by the working of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity. Gospel religion is Christ in the life—a living, active principle. It is the grace of Christ revealed in character and wrought out in good works. The principles of the gospel cannot be disconnected from any department of practical life. Every line of Christian experience and labor is to be a representation of the life of Christ. {COL 384.1}

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}

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us." In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. {AA 551.2}

The voice and tongue are gifts from God, and if rightly used, they are a power for God. Words mean very much. They may express love, devotion, praise, melody to God, or hatred and revenge. Words reveal the sentiments of the heart. They may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The tongue is a world of blessing, or a world of iniquity. {SD 180.5}

Some are seen to come forth from their daily communion with God clothed with the meekness of Christ. Their words are not like a desolating hail, crushing everything before it; they come forth sweetly from their lips. They scatter seeds of love and kindness all along their path, and that all unconsciously, because Christ lives in their heart. Their influence is felt more than it is seen. {SD 180.6}

Kind, tender, compassionate words will flow from sanctified hearts and lips. {SD 180.7}

A kind, courteous Christian is the most powerful argument that can be produced in favor of Christianity. {GW 122.1}