

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2017: *The Gospel in Galatians*

Lesson 9 “Paul’s Pastoral Appeal”

Read for this week’s study

Galatians 4:12–20; 1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 9:19–23; 2 Corinthians 4:7–12.

Memory Text

“Friends, I beg you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are” (Galatians 4:12, NRSV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Heart of Paul
- III. The Challenge to Become
- IV. I Have Become as You Are
- V. Then and Now
- VI. Speaking the Truth
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “In Galatians 4:12–20 Paul continues his discourse, though he changes his approach, at least a bit. Paul has made a number of detailed and theologically sophisticated arguments to persuade the Galatians of their errors, and now he makes a more personal, pastoral appeal. Unlike the false teachers who had no true interest in the Galatians, Paul reveals the genuine concern, worry, hope, and love of a good shepherd for his wayward flock. He was not just correcting theology; he was seeking to minister to those whom he loved.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. In chapter 4, Paul takes three approaches as he seeks to convince the Galatians that as they attempt to live the Christian life, legalism leads to slavery: He explains their adoption (4:1-7); he laments their regression (8-11); and he seeks their affection (12-18).
3. Since 2:15 Paul has been mounting a step-by-step argument requiring his readers (and us 2,000 years later!) to follow him closely and think hard. Now he shows them he is not just a brain with mouth attached, but a warm-hearted human being with an interest in their love and loyalty. He tells them not just what he is thinking, but how he feels, what sort of thoughts are rushing through his head at a more personal level.

4. Why is it so important that theological matters are not only cerebral arguments, but a heart-to-heart communal experience? Why must the result of God's grace working on us be also friendship, communal loyalty and a mutual bond established by what God has done for all of us together?
5. In 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9 & 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul encourages believers to imitate his behavior. "In Galatians 4:12, Paul does not ask the Galatians to imitate him; instead, he asks that they 'become as' he is—he is talking about being, not acting. Why? The trouble in Galatia was not unethical behavior or an ungodly lifestyle, as in the church in Corinth. The issue in Galatia was rooted in the essence of Christianity itself. It was more about 'being' than 'behavior.' Paul was not saying act like me, but be what I am." (Monday's lesson)
6. Why is it so dangerous to place such a great value on our behavior that our identity is based on what we do rather than what Christ has done?
7. We do not know what the problem was when Paul first visited Galatia, but it is obvious that his physical condition was so bad that it was quite off-putting to the Galatians. Yet they did not reject him or the message, but accepted him because their hearts had been warmed by the preaching of the cross (Galatians 3:1) and the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
8. In the current visual TV society with its celebrity cult, fine clothes, showing off wealth and social status, how can we make sure we listen to what is said, not just who says it?
9. Paul says that if at that time the Galatians would have done anything for him, why are they turning away from him now? Of course, the real reasons for the break in their relationship have been the other people who have come in. Theological arguments are important; but unless they take place within a context where people are bonded together in mutual trust and shared Christian experience, they will reach only the head, not the heart, and definitely not the will.
10. Why can religion become a way of "using people" to tie them to ourselves, to build up the preacher, or a group, to demand exclusive allegiance as if we are the only ones who are right?
11. As a result of the work of the Judaizers, the Galatians were led into bondage and sorrow. Christ had made them [adult] sons and heirs, but they were rapidly becoming slaves and beggars.
12. Paul says he feels like a mother going through labor pains all over again, so that the Messiah is "formed within you". This little section (vs. 12-20) stands as a witness to the marriage of head and heart in teaching and pastoral work. We may convince people's minds, but unless we can make them feel through other types of communication that what really matters is the formation of Christ's own life in a new community, we will have little effect on them.

13. Within the grace of God, there can be no outer circle and inner circle – in the Messiah’s new community, there was neither Jew nor Greek. The Judaizers might show their zeal, but more than zeal is needed to transform hearts and society.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Recommended Listening: The entire series by Graham Maxwell on the book of Galatians is available at <http://pkp.cc/MMGALATIANS66>

Suffering is destructive, unless we’ve seen this larger view. God might be disciplining us. He might be allowing us to reap what we’ve sown. Or it might be we’re just living on this dangerous planet, full of terrorists and viruses and germs and drunk drivers. With the larger view we understand this, and we have peace. Paul was beheaded, but he was at peace, and said, “I don’t mind if I die. I won’t be aware of my time of death. I’ll be with the Lord,” he said. He wasn’t afraid to die. What makes people afraid to die? Isn’t it that when we die, every one of us comes face to face with God? You can’t avoid it. Saints and sinners alike, when they die, the next moment of consciousness will be face to face with God. Will it be terrifying to come face to face with someone who knows us so well? Every detail of our lives? Not if we’ve learned the truth about God, and how he even treated Judas. If I come face to face with God, and I’m Judas, he would kneel down and wash my feet, if it would do any good. That’s the way he is. Or will he change in the end?

How did Jesus look at Judas when Judas went out to commit suicide? Isn’t it the same way he looked at Peter? Exactly the same. We, even if we’re lost, have no reason to be afraid of our heavenly Father. The worst thing he’ll do is to sadly give us up. That is his wrath. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Romans*, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/61MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/62MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Did you notice all the references to suffering, in the second letter that he wrote? Over and over. In 1:8, “take your share of suffering.” And verse 12, he says, “I suffer as I do, but I’m not ashamed.” And then in 2:3, “Take your share of suffering.” And 3:12, “if we endure, we shall also reign with him;” And then in 4:5, “always be steady, endure suffering,” There’s great mention of suffering. Are we suffering? Some people suffer a great deal. Some of us seem to get off rather easily. Does that mean something’s wrong if we’re not suffering? What are these sufferings that he’s talking about, do you think? What sufferings? Does it mean being

shipwrecked, and scourged, and imprisoned? “Take your share of suffering, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” How do you understand all that reference to suffering? Some people even inflict suffering on themselves to show they really are saints, or help themselves to be saints. Is that the idea? Lots of mention of enduring. Revelation 14:12 talks about “here’s a call for the endurance of the saints.” Of course, if we’re caught up in the great controversy, the meaning of endurance takes on great significance.

When in the end, everything seems so confusing, to persist, as Job did, and not be too easily shaken. It seems to me that there are all kinds of suffering. As a boy, I thought the worst thing would be to be taken down into the basement of a cathedral and put on the rack, and stretched, and all that sort of thing; because I’d been to Madam Tussauds in London and gone down into the Chamber of Horrors and seen the things they used to do. That has been in my imagination ever since. But I now realize there are more exquisite forms of suffering than that. And the greatest suffering occurs in the mind.

You think of the suffering of Job, when everybody seemed to have abandoned him, and even God seemed to have abandoned him. In fact, isn’t that what caused the greatest suffering for Job? When he seemed to be totally deserted of God, and he cried, “God, why won’t you talk to me? We always used to be such good friends, but you won’t speak to me now.” That would be the worst kind of suffering. I think we shouldn’t oversimplify it too much, on the nature of the suffering that’s mentioned here so much. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*
<http://pkp.cc/71MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/72MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

God permits every person to exercise his individuality. No human mind should be submerged in another human mind. But the invitation has been given, “Let *this mind* be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Each person is to stand before God with an individual faith, an individual experience, knowing for himself that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. For us to imitate the example of any man—even a person who in our human judgment we might regard as nearly perfect in character—would be to put our trust in an imperfect, defective human being, who is unable to impart one jot or tittle of perfection to any other human being. {OHC 108.3}

Christ came to our world to engage in singlehanded combat with this enemy of man, and thus to wrest the race from Satan’s grasp. In the accomplishment of this object He withheld not His own life. And now, in the strength that Christ will give, man must stand for himself, a faithful sentinel against the wily, plotting foe. Says the great apostle, “Walk circumspectly”—guard every avenue of the soul, look constantly to Jesus, the true and perfect Pattern, and seek to

imitate His example, not in one or two points merely, but in all things. We shall then be prepared for any and every emergency. . . . He whose mind loves to dwell upon God has a strong defense. He will be quick to perceive the dangers that threaten his spiritual life, and a sense of danger will lead him to call upon God for help and protection. {TMK 240.4}

Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, "Ye shall receive." {AA 564.1}

It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence. {GC 555.1}

Jesus came in personal contact with men. He did not stand aloof and apart from those who needed His help. He entered the homes of men, comforted the mourner, healed the sick, aroused the careless, and went about doing good. And if we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must do as He did. We must give men the same kind of help that He did. {ML 227.4}

Though He was a Jew, Jesus mingled freely with the Samaritans, setting at nought the Pharisaic customs of His nation. In face of their prejudices He accepted the hospitality of this despised people. He slept with them under their roofs, ate with them at their tables—partaking of the food prepared and served by their hands—taught in their streets, and treated them with the utmost kindness and courtesy. {LHU 183.3}

The religion of Jesus softens whatever is hard and rough in the temper, and smooths whatever is rugged and sharp in the manners. It makes the words gentle and the demeanor winning. Let us learn from Christ how to combine a high sense of purity and integrity with sunniness of disposition. A kind, courteous Christian is the most powerful argument that can be produced in favor of Christianity. {GW 122.1}

But always the words of rebuke that God finds it necessary to send are spoken in tender love and with the promise of peace to every penitent believer. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," the Lord declares; "if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20. {AA 587.2}

In the visible creation, divine wisdom is manifested in an endless variety of processes. Uniformity is not the rule that is followed in the kingdom of nature. Neither is it the rule that is followed in the kingdom of grace. In different ways God works to attain one purpose—the saving of souls. By different methods the gracious Redeemer deals with different minds. The change of heart is as truly wrought out by one process as by another. It is the Lord working upon minds and molding characters. {TDG 67.2}

All are not led to the Lord in precisely the same way. Human beings are not to define, arbitrarily and narrowly, the characteristics of God's working on minds. It may be given to one to gain spiritual strength and discernment easily, while another has to contend with "a thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7), and at times is ready, apparently, to step off the heights over the precipice. Yet who dare say that God does not still love and regard as His child the one so sorely beset, and that His hand is not still stretched out to save? {TDG 67.3}