

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**Third Quarter 2020: *Making Friends for God: The Joy of Sharing in His Mission***  
**Lesson 5 “Spirit-Empowered Witnessing”**

**Read for this week’s study**

John 15:26, 27; Acts 2:41, 42; Acts 8:4; Hebrews 4:12; Acts 17:33, 34; Acts 18:8.

**Memory Text**

“And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31, NKJV).

**Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide**

- I. Introduction
- II. Jesus and the Promise of the Holy Spirit
- III. An Empowered Church
- IV. The Holy Spirit and Witnessing
- V. The Holy Spirit, the Word, and Witnessing
- VI. The Life-Transforming Power of the Holy Spirit
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. Acts 4:31 speaks about the early Christians all being “filled with the Holy Spirit. How do you know when you are filled with the Spirit? Read Colossians 1:23. What does Paul mean when he says that the gospel was preached to “every creature under heaven”? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read John 16:7. In what way was it to the advantage of the disciples for Jesus to go away? Read John 15:26-27 and 16:8. What do these verses tell us about the Holy Spirit’s role in witnessing? Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26. Who does the converting when we work for souls? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Acts 2:41-42; 4:4, 31; 5:14, 42; 6:7 and 16:5. What impresses you most about these passages? To what degree are numbers and statistics important in measuring the work of the church? (Monday’s lesson)
4. Read Acts 7:55; 8:29; 11:15; 15:28-29 and 16:6-10. How did the Holy Spirit minister to the witnessing disciples in each of these experiences? Is there something we can

do to make ourselves more amenable to the power of the Holy Spirit in our own lives? (Tuesday's lesson)

5. Read Acts 4:4, 31; 8:4; 13:48-49; 17:2 and 18:24-25. What do these passages teach us about the relationship between the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and the witness of the New Testament church? Read 2 Peter 1:21 and Hebrews 4:12. What is it about the Word of God that makes it so powerful in changing lives? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Acts 16:11-15, 23-34; 17:33-34 and 18:8. What do these various conversion accounts teach us about the power of God to change the lives of all sorts of people from various backgrounds? What is it that God truly wants from each of us? It certainly has to be something every human being is capable of doing. What would that be? (Thursday's lesson)
7. Share with the group a time when you sensed the Holy Spirit working powerfully through your witness. (Friday's lesson)
8. Why is the Bible such a crucial component of our faith and witness? If one were to witness in a place where use of the Bible is forbidden, how would one go about it? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Here we have Jesus' words, "It would be better that I go." And yet we know that the Holy Spirit has been here all along, doing his work, which it would appear, is not one whit different from the work of Christ. He's a teacher. Jesus said, "If I go, I will send another Counselor, like myself, another of the same kind, and he will do the very work that I have been doing. But you won't see him. He will quietly work behind the scenes."

After Jesus left, they realized they were alone, though in the Greek he had said, "I do not leave you orphans, you are not alone. The Spirit will come and guide you." For the very first time they sat down and opened their Bibles and went to work. They actually began to think things through. But why do that, when you have the Lord visibly present? I mean, if the Lord were here tonight, and we should have a question, why should you go and get the books out? Why not ask him directly?

And Jesus says, "It would be better that I go, because you'll never grow up if you don't start thinking it through for yourselves." And so he says, "It's better that I go now."

And you can't see the Spirit. If you want to consult the Spirit, you'd better open and read the books that he has inspired. And as Ellen White says, "Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to must be judged by the scriptures."

So he doesn't come as just a voice of authority. He comes with the authority of truth, which you will find in the scriptures. And the men began to grow up, in the upper room. And finally they realized that the authority of their message lay in the truth, which they found as the two men on the way to Emmaus did, by comparing the teachings of the Old Testament with the life and the teachings and the sufferings and the death of Christ. When they put that all together, at last they were ready to go. And then the Spirit showed himself. He'd been there all along. Who'd inspired the scriptures they were reading? Who was guiding them in the interpretation of these scriptures? But when finally they put it all together and they were ready to go, then the Spirit appeared. Some say, "The Spirit came." No, they wouldn't have been where they were if the Spirit hadn't worked all along. Now the Spirit gave them visible endorsement.

"Now you're ready to go. Now you take the truth. Look how Paul did. "You're going to take the scriptures out, and you're going to tie in with that the culminating revelation, based on the Old Testament, to be found in the way Jesus lived, the way he treated people, the way he suffered, and the way he died.

And then they really had authority and power, but not a visible leader. And that's the authority we have. So I think there were many ways, perhaps, in which it was better that Jesus go. And the one that appeals to me most is that they never would have grown up so long as he was there, and they could run to him and say "Is it this? Is it that?" {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Acts, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/59MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/60MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

If the work of the Holy Spirit is to convince us of the truth, he also is the one who inspired some of our fellow believers to write out this record of the revelation of the truth about our God. If I resist the Holy Spirit, I'm resisting the truth. I'm resisting the evidence. And since the truth, the evidence, the weight of evidence, is God's only means; particularly the truth spoken in love, is God's ultimate means of persuading me. If I turn that down, there is no other way. That's all. There's nothing arbitrary about this. It's just that God's only instrument of persuasion and conviction and even healing is the truth. And if I turn the truth down, well, this is how God hardened Pharaoh's heart. He brought a revelation of himself to Pharaoh. Pharaoh could have said yes, and been softened by the truth, and maybe gone with them to Canaan! My, that would have been an interesting scene; towing Pharaoh in his chariot across the wilderness into Canaan. But he could, if he'd responded. Just as Judas could have been touched. But Judas turned this down. Pharaoh turned it down. And if you keep resisting the truth, it does something to your mind, and eventually the power to think and to do is destroyed; the image of God within us. And then there's nothing more that God can do. And it's not arbitrary at all.

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Now it's a great privilege to be the one who gets there with the good news, but sometimes somebody else gets there first. Think of missionaries who have been shipwrecked on the reef as they're about to arrive on an island to somehow "turn those cannibals into Christians."

And as they're drowning out there, here come these cannibals paddling their canoe. And they say farewell to each other; they know what's going to happen shortly. But instead, the cannibals put them in their canoe and take them to the beach and revive them. And finally when they're comfortable, the missionary says "now let us assemble these people and give them the truth." And he starts to preach to them about love.

His missionary wife nudges him and says, "Wait a minute. These people risked their lives to rescue us from the reef!"

The minister says, "But nobody's preached to them yet."

Well, remember Romans 2. "The Spirit of God in many and various ways has approached people." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #2 with Lou Venden, "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>

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

He assured them that He would be with them; and that if they would go forth in faith, they should move under the shield of Omnipotence. He bade them be brave and strong; for One mightier than angels would be in their ranks—the General of the armies of heaven. He made full provision for the prosecution of their work and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success. . . . Labor in faith and confidence; for the time will never come when I will forsake you. I will be with you always, helping you to perform your duty, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, sustaining you, giving you success in speaking words that shall draw the attention of others to heaven. {AA 29.1}

Joy in the Holy Spirit is health-giving, life-giving joy. In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world. {7T 273.1}

Provision is made by God Himself for every soul that turns to the Lord, to receive His immediate cooperation. The Holy Spirit becomes His efficiency. {ML 47.4}

The Holy Spirit was sent as the most priceless treasure man could receive. {ML 36.5}

The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (MS 41, 1897). {6BC 1112.1}

God has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. He provides opportunities and opens channels of working. If His people are watching the indications of His providence, and are ready to cooperate with Him, they will see mighty results. {PK 660.3}

There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God. . . . Christ declared that the divine influence of the Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. {ML 37.4}

If men will walk in the path that God has marked out for them, they will have a counselor whose wisdom is far above any human wisdom. {2BC 993.1}

Our God is an ever-present help in every time of need. He is perfectly acquainted with the most secret thoughts of our heart, with all the intents and purposes of our souls. When we are in perplexity, even before we open to Him our distress, He is making arrangements for our deliverance. Our sorrow is not unnoticed. He always knows much better than we do, just what is necessary for the good of His children, and He leads us as we would choose to be led if we could discern our own hearts and see our necessities and perils, as God sees them. But finite beings seldom know themselves. They do not understand their own weakness. . . . God knows them better than they know themselves, and He understands how to lead them. . . . {OHC 316.4}

We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes (MS 16, 1888). {7BC 945.3}

God committed the preparation of His divinely inspired Word to finite man. This Word, arranged into books, the Old and New Testaments, is the guidebook to the inhabitants of a

fallen world, bequeathed to them that, by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way to heaven. {FLB 10.2}

The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all “given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language. {FLB 10.3}

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from Satan’s deceptions. {CT 457.1}

In the Bible the will of God is revealed. The truths of the Word of God are the utterances of the Most High. He who makes these truths a part of his life becomes in every sense a new creature. He is not given new mental powers, but the darkness that through ignorance and sin has clouded the understanding is removed. The words, “A new heart also will I give you,” mean, “A new mind will I give you.” A change of heart is always attended by a clear conviction of Christian duty, an understanding of truth. He who gives the Scriptures close, prayerful attention will gain clear comprehension and sound judgment, as if in turning to God he had reached a higher plane of intelligence. {ML 24.2}