

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Third Quarter 2020: *Making Friends for God: The Joy of Sharing in His Mission*

#### Lesson 7 “Sharing the Word”

#### Read for this week’s study

Psalm 119:105; Jeremiah 23:29; Hebrews 1:1–3; 2 Timothy 3:14–17; 1 John 1:7–9;  
Ecclesiastes 3:1; 2 Timothy 4:2.

#### Memory Text

“ ‘So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent I’ ” (Isaiah 55:11, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Symbols of God’s Word
- III. The Creative Power of God’s Word
- IV. The Benefits of Studying God’s Word
- V. Applying God’s Word
- VI. Sharing the Word
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read John 1:9. If the Bible never existed, what would we be missing in terms of knowledge about God, history and the universe? Since the Bible does exist, how do we approach it in such a way as to rightly understand it? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Psalm 119:105, Jeremiah 23:29, Luke 8:11, and Matthew 4:4. What five symbols in these passages are used to describe the Word of God? Why would these five be chosen to represent the Word of God? (Sunday’s Lesson)
3. Compare Hebrews 1:1-3, 4:12, and Psalm 33:6, 9. What do these passages tell us about the power of God’s Word? According to texts like 2 Chronicles 20, reciting the mighty acts of God brings the power of the original act into the present situation. Why does reciting the acts of God carry such power? (Monday’s Lesson)
4. What are some of the many benefits of studying the Word of God? See James 1:21; 2 Peter 1:4; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and John 17:14-17. Describe a

time when you faced a difficult situation and the Word of God proved to be a strength to you. (Tuesday's Lesson)

5. When we talk about Bible promises, what exactly do we mean and how do they operate? Compare John 1:7-9 and Philippians 4:13 and 19. Although these promises are quite different, what do they teach us about the character of God? Read Hebrews 3:19; 4:1-3 and Matthew 13:58. What do these verses tell us about the role of faith in our relationship with God? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Read Isaiah 50:4; Ecclesiastes 3:1 and 2 Timothy 4:3. What principles about sharing the word of God do these texts give us? How do you know when witnessing is appropriate in a given situation? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. God is working in the lives of people all around us. How do we detect the witnessing opportunities that God's prior working provides for us? How can we become more sensitive to God's leading? (Friday's Lesson)
8. If someone comes to you feeling terribly guilty over something and needing forgiveness from God, what counsel would you give and what Bible texts would you share? What experiences with guilt and forgiveness in your life would be relevant to the lives of others? (Friday's Lesson)
9. We all have known the comfort that comes from contemplating the mercy of God. But what comfort can we gain from knowing the infinite power of God? (Friday's Lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Do you remember in Romans, at the beginning, he says, "I have been commissioned to make known God's good news, which might lead some to a new kind of obedience. Not the obedience that springs from law, but the obedience that springs from faith and trust." Now, how you define faith and trust enters into this. And we need to read other places. To me, faith is just a word we use to describe a relationship with God as with a person well known; and we get to know him through the gospel. The good news is about God, that he is infinitely worthy of our trust. It implies an attitude toward God of love, and trust, and deepest admiration. It means having enough confidence in God, based upon the more than adequate evidence believed, all summed up in the good news, to be willing to believe what God says, as soon as we're sure *He* said it. And to accept what God offers, as soon as we're sure *He's* offering it, and to do whatever God wishes, without reservation. Of course, as soon as we're sure *He's* asking us, and not somebody else, without reservation, for the rest of eternity.

Now, anybody who has such a trusting relationship with God, of love, trust, and admiration, willingness to listen, is perfectly safe to save. He could die just beginning that relationship, like the thief on the cross. He would arise loving, trusting, and admiring that kind one in the middle.

He will be willing to listen, and accept all kinds of instruction and correction. He is therefore safe to save. But you can't regard God in that attitude without a new heart and a right spirit, so you are a new creature, which he's going to mention in a moment. And that's what David eventually wanted; truth and honesty in the inner man. Mention honesty, and you remember Micah, Amos, Hosea; they all talked about this. All God asks of us is that we stand humbly in his presence, with an honest willingness to listen, and let him do for us whatever needs to be done.

And I think the message in Galatians is that if we don't have that relationship, we will not be saved. And if all the things that we believe and do, do not lead us to that, it has been of no avail. Now, he says that's all Abraham offered God. He hadn't even been circumcised. Yet he was God's friend. And God will save all his friends. But do you remember the hardworking saints that he could not save? The ones who say, "Lord, Lord, open unto us! Have we not done many wonderful works in Thy name? Cast out devils in Thy name?" And he says, "Go away! We never were friends." "I never knew you" doesn't mean "I don't know your name." We know that, remember, from many passages in the Bible. It means, "We never knew each other. We never were friends. Now, I knew Abraham. He was my friend. And I knew Moses. And they knew me." So the essential thing is to have this relationship. And surely Paul discusses and emphasizes that more than anyone else. And he says once you have this, then you won't need the authoritarian guardianship of law to do what's right. You'll do what's right for another reason. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Galatians*, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/65MMPOGIA66>*

So what is the message of the cross? Evidently it's much more than the payment of a legal penalty so that somehow God can justly forgive you and me. The cross was needed by the loyal angels. And this truly suggests (and we'll do it in this series) that we ought to go back to the foot of the cross and join the universe, the family of the universe, in watching closely just how Jesus died. And then listening very carefully to how Jesus cried, and what he cried: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" What does that mean? And how does that suffering and death bring peace—once again—to God's family? I believe that in the great controversy, all Christian beliefs take on much broader significance. Particularly does the gospel take on a much larger meaning.

You see, while we're still preoccupied with our own salvation, the gospel quite naturally might be understood as the good news about what God has done for me and for you. But in the larger great controversy setting, the gospel is the truth about our gracious God; the truth that ends the war, and confirms the loyalty of the universe, and wins some of us back to repentance and

to trust. I believe (more strongly than I believe anything) that the most important of all our beliefs is the truth about our God. God is not the kind of person his enemies have made him out to be—arbitrary, vengeful, and severe. He is instead precisely as his Son revealed him to be. We believe the testimony of Jesus when he said, “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” God is just as loving and gracious as his Son; just as willing to forgive and heal.

Could there be any better news than that? To me, that’s the everlasting good news that holds the loyalty of the universe. And wins us back, and will hold our loyalty and trust for the rest of eternity. And this is the message we have the high privilege of sharing with people all over this planet, who may not know they are members of God’s family, but who deserve to know, and who deserve to hear this truth. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #1, “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>

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

The Bible was not written for the scholar alone; on the contrary, it was designed for the common people. The great truths necessary for our salvation are made as clear as noonday, and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God. {LHU 130.6}

The heavenly universe had witnessed the weapons that were chosen by the Prince of life—the words of Scripture, “It is written”; and the weapons used by the prince of the world—falsehood and deception. They had seen the Prince of life deal in straightforward lines of truth, honesty, and integrity, while the prince of the world exercised his power of cunning, artful secrecy, intrigue, enmity, and revenge. They had seen the One who bore the banner of truth sacrifice everything, even His life, to maintain truth, while the one who bore the banner of rebellion continued to strengthen his accusations against the God of truth. {RC 60.5}

Christ came to reveal to a fallen race the love of God. He, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of the brightness of His divinity, and came to live on this earth as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. No man has seen God at any time, except as He is revealed through Christ. {UL 334.5}

The truth if received is capable of constant expansion and new developments. It will increase in brightness as we behold it, and grow in height and depth as we aspire to grasp it. Thus it will elevate us to the standard of perfection, and give us faith and trust in God as our strength for the work before us (MS 153, 1898). {5BC 1147.3}

The truths of the Bible, treasured in the heart and mind and obeyed in the life, convince and convert the soul, transform the character, and comfort and uplift the heart. . . . {TMK 199.2}

Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences (MS 78, 1901). {1BC 1081.2}

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth (RH Feb. 11, 1902). {1BC 1081.3}

God’s created works testify to His love and power. He has called the world into being, with all that it contains. God is a lover of the beautiful; and in the world which He has fitted up for us He has not only given us everything necessary for our comfort, but He has filled the heavens and the earth with beauty. We see His love and care in the rich fields of autumn, and His smile in the glad sunshine. His hand has made the castle-like rocks and the towering mountains. The lofty trees grow at His command; He has spread earth’s green velvet carpet and dotted it with shrubs and flowers. {CT 185.1}

Above all lower orders of being, God designed that man, the crowning work of His creation, should express His thought and reveal His glory. {MH 415.3}

The God of heaven is constantly at work. It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms. Every drop of rain or flake of snow, every spire of grass, every leaf and flower and shrub, testifies of God. These little things so common around us teach the lesson that nothing is beneath the notice of the infinite God, nothing is too small for His attention. {8T 260.1}

To human beings, striving for conformity to the divine image, there is imparted an outlay of heaven’s treasure, an excellency of power that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen. {HP 148.5}

Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings. {PP 33.2}

But the power of God is still exercised in upholding the objects of His creation. It is not because the mechanism once set in motion continues to act by its own inherent energy that the pulse beats, and breath follows breath. Every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the care of Him in whom we live and move and have our being. From the smallest insect to man, every living creature is daily dependent upon His providence. . . . {Ed 130.5}

God wants our minds to expand. He desires to put His grace upon us. We may have a feast of good things every day, for God can open the whole treasure of heaven to us. {Mar 23.3}

The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human

is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes. {7BC 945.7}

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. {1SM 16.3}

In giving us this word, God has put us in possession of every truth essential to salvation. Thousands have drawn water from these wells of life, yet there is no diminishing of the supply. Thousands have set the Lord before them, and by beholding have become changed into the same image. But these searchers have not exhausted these grand and holy themes. Thousands more may engage in the work of searching out the mysteries of salvation. {GW 250.4}

Such transformation of character as is seen in the life of John is ever the result of communion with Christ. There may be marked defects in the character of an individual, yet when he becomes a true disciple of Christ, the power of divine grace transforms and sanctifies him. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed from glory to glory, until he is like Him whom he adores. {AA 559.1}

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}

The leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up—the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are aroused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. {HP 21.4}

It is by faith in the Son of God that transformation takes place in the character, and the child of wrath becomes the child of God. He passes from death unto life; he becomes spiritual and discerns spiritual things. The wisdom of God enlightens his mind, and he beholds wondrous things out of His law. As a man is converted by the truth, the work of transformation of character goes on. He has an increased measure of understanding. In becoming a man of obedience to God, he has the mind of Christ, and the will of God becomes his will. {1SM 338.1}

By beholding Jesus we receive a living, expanding principle in the heart, and the Holy Spirit carries on the work, and the believer advances from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from character to character. He conforms to the image of Christ, until in spiritual growth he

attains unto the measure of the full stature in Christ Jesus. Thus Christ makes an end of the curse of sin, and sets the believing soul free from its action and effect. {1SM 395.1}

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures. {COL 60.1}

Communion with God through prayer develops the mental and moral faculties, and the spiritual powers strengthen as we cultivate thoughts upon spiritual things. {FE 443.1}

In the gift of the Spirit, Jesus gave to man the highest good that heaven could bestow. . . . It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon the church. . . . It is the privilege of every son and daughter of God to have the indwelling of the Spirit. {OHC 150.3}

The plan of redemption is not merely a way of escape from the penalty of transgression, but through it the sinner is forgiven his sins, and will be finally received into heaven—not as a forgiven culprit pardoned and released from captivity, yet looked upon with suspicion and not admitted to friendship and trust; but welcomed as a child, and taken back into fullest confidence. {7BC 950.6}

Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be; but the worse you are, the more you need Jesus. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration. {DA 568.3}

If you take even one step toward Him in repentance, He will hasten to enfold you in His arms of infinite love. His ear is open to the cry of the contrite soul. The very first reaching out of the heart after God is known to Him. Never a prayer is offered, however faltering, never a tear is shed, however secret, never a sincere desire after God is cherished, however feeble, but the Spirit of God goes forth to meet it. Even before the prayer is uttered or the yearning of the heart made known, grace from Christ goes forth to meet the grace that is working upon the human soul. {FLB 129.3}

Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. {MH 248.2}

The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God. {Ed 126.4}

Abundant provision has been made that those who will seek God with the whole heart may find Him a present help in every time of trouble. Help has been laid on One that is mighty. Christ has promised, I will be your helper. {OHC 107.4}

At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of faith. Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer. {DA 669.4}

It is a wonderful thought that human beings can speak the Word of God, in simple words of comfort and encouragement. The humblest instruments will be used of God to sow the seeds of truth, which may spring up and bear fruit, because the one in whose heart they were sown needed help—a kind thought, a kind word, made effective by the One who has said, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” —Letter 329a, Nov. 16, 1905, to her 19-year-old granddaughter Mabel. {TDG 329.6}