

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Third Quarter 2020: *Making Friends for God: The Joy of Sharing in His Mission* Lesson 10 “An Exciting Way to Get Involved”

#### Read for this week’s study

Genesis 1:1, 2, 26; Exodus 18:21–25; 1 Corinthians 12:12–25; Acts 16:11–15, 40; Acts 4:31; Acts 12:12.

#### Memory Text

“Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest’ ” (Matthew 9:37, 38, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Small Groups: God’s Idea First
- III. Small Groups in Scripture
- IV. Organized for Service
- V. New Testament Small Groups
- VI. Small Group Dynamics
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “During this week’s study, we will focus on the biblical basis for small groups, and you will discover an exciting way for you to get involved. [...] Throughout the Bible, small groups are highlighted as one of God’s methods of strengthening our faith, increasing our knowledge of His word, deepening our prayer life, and equipping us to witness.” (Sabbath Afternoon)
2. Do you know an exciting way to be involved? How and why is it working? Would the same method work for people who are wired differently, or are in a different location or culture?
3. What is the immediate context of the memory text (Matthew 9:37, 38)? Why did Matthew use two chapters to illustrate Jesus’ use of authority? What was the result?
4. Besides the Lord’s prayer, Jesus does not often tell his followers what to pray for. Why is it different this time? What is the purpose of this prayer? What is the result of this prayer? What was the result for the disciples (Matthew 10:1-15)?

5. As seen in Matthew 10, sometimes when Christ's followers pray that prayer, the answer comes back worryingly quickly: you, yourselves, are the answer to your own prayer. To what extent is that true of all prayers?
6. "The serious Christians who set down for the first time in a Christian community, are likely to bring with them a very definite idea of what Christian life together should be and then they try to realize it. But God's grace speedily shatters such dreams. Just as surely as God desires to lead us to a knowledge of genuine Christian fellowship, so surely must we be overwhelmed by a great disillusionment with others, with Christians in general, and if we are fortunate, with ourselves." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *Life Together*)
7. Why does God send new Christians to become part of a community? How does the body metaphor teach us important truths about our Christian experience (1 Corinthians 12:12-25)? (Tuesday's lesson)
8. Ministry in the New Testament is based on spiritual gifts (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4). Each one of us has some, but nobody has all. Why would God add such supernatural diversity to the body of Christ? (Wednesday's lesson)
9. The redeemed in the New Jerusalem are pictured as a single multitude, but still recognizable as from "every nation, tribe, language and people" (Revelation 7:9.10). The community of Christ created by the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is not a battery farm of clones, but a vast family of precious individuals, each one loved and valued for their uniqueness.
10. Where are the fields ready for harvest today? What should our prayer be? How can we, personally, be part of God's answer now?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Reading through the Bible book by book, the most important advice I could give is *don't forget the question*. The question is what does it say about God? So when you get to the Flood don't get into a long discussion of how he got the dinosaurs in the ark and all that sort of thing. It doesn't help at all. The question is what kind of a God would drown all but eight? And they weren't that good either, were they? What does it say about God?

A guide when we went through book by book, we've done it with small and sometimes very large groups, was volume 6, page 87 and 88. Those two pages entitled "Less Preaching, More Teaching". I like small groups because they make good sense. But you see, Ellen White also urges the small groups because it does make good sense. It all fits together. She says, "I have been shown that in our large religious gatherings there's all together too much preaching and sermonizing and not enough Bible study." Now you know she was a great preacher. But she said what we need more than preaching is Bible study. So as she goes down the page she says:

I have been shown that as the end approaches there will be little groups gathered together, their Bibles in their hands [they're not just philosophizing] different ones leading out [there has to be leadership for things to progress] but leading out in the free, conversational study of the Scriptures.

And I love the top of the next page: "This was the method Jesus taught His disciples." And that's how they took the gospel to the whole world in a single generation. It really works and little groups are wonderful. Twelve to eighteen, I don't know how many of those I've had especially with students but with ministers and people of all ages. But it's great for prayer meeting. Some churches even have it Sabbath mornings, and go through the Bible book by book. It helps to complete it in the course of a year so you won't forget Genesis by the time you get to Revelation.

The little groups really work if they're well handled. Now those who make the worst leaders of groups it has been discovered are teachers and preachers because they talk too much. Robert Maynard Hutchens resigned as a young man as president of the University of Chicago after the bomb went off. I was there in the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel when he said, "I give the world at most five more years. We're going to destroy ourselves." And he resigned. As a young man he said, "I am going to organize at least 15 million Americans in small study groups to read the great books so we'll develop enough good sense not to destroy ourselves. Now" he said, "as you organize these groups to read the great books" he said, "a taxi driver will make a much better leader than a minister or a teacher." He said, "Ministers and teachers lead out and preach the whole time." He said, "The taxi driver may say, 'Now guys, we read this here book by Plato last week, what do you think about it?' And his only contribution will be to say, 'By the way we're talking about Plato not Aristotle' or something else. He'd just keep them going but he's not taking over the meeting."

A lot of our folk need to be drawn out to express their own convictions at these times and often they have a lot of wisdom they've never told anybody before. And you have an absolutely marvelous time doing it. In fact, it's so good you need someone to indicate when it's time to quit. I know my groups always do. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, *We've Camped Around This Mountain Long Enough*, #8, 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/8MMCAMPED>*

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

He became flesh even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of men; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and

tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man. {MH 422.2}

One of the divine plans for growth is impartation. The Christian is to gain strength by strengthening others. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." This is not merely a promise; it is a divine law, a law by which God designs that the streams of benevolence, like the waters of the great deep, shall be kept in constant circulation, continually flowing back to their source. In the fulfilling of this law is the secret of spiritual growth (ST June 12, 1901). {7BC 947.3}

His strong personal sympathy helped to win hearts. He often repaired to the mountains for solitary prayer, but this was a preparation for His labor among men in active life. From these seasons He came forth to relieve the sick, to instruct the ignorant, and to break the chains from the captives of Satan. {DA 151.2}

It was by personal contact and association that Jesus trained His disciples. Sometimes He taught them, sitting among them on the mountainside; sometimes beside the sea, or walking with them by the way, He revealed the mysteries of the kingdom of God. He did not sermonize as men do today. Wherever hearts were open to receive the divine message, He unfolded the truths of the way of salvation. He did not command His disciples to do this or that, but said, "Follow Me." On His journeys through country and cities He took them with Him, that they might see how He taught the people. He linked their interest with His, and they united with Him in the work. {DA 152.1}

God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those who on the day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. At this very hour His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word. {FLB 292.7}