

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

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

#### Lesson 13 “A Step in Faith”

#### Read for this week’s study

Philippians 2:5–11; Matthew 4:18–20; Acts 9:3–6, 10–20; John 21:15–19; 1 John 3:16–18.

#### Memory Text

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:5–7, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Jesus’ Self-Sacrificing Love
- III. Commitment’s Call
- IV. Paul: God’s Chosen Vessel
- V. The Demands of Love
- VI. Love’s Commitment
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “The sacrifice that Jesus made for our salvation was incalculable. When we respond to His leading, accept His command, and unite with Him in reaching lost people for His kingdom, it calls for sacrifice. Although our sacrifices can never in any way compare to His, soul-winning ministry is for us, as well, a leap in faith. It leads us out of our comfort zones into uncharted waters. At times our Lord calls us to make sacrifices, but the joys He offers are far greater.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. There are some Christians who say that because the Bible is inspired by God, we do not need to interpret its message or state it in forms that make sense to different cultures and perspectives. The Holy Spirit would make God’s message understandable to those who would be believers. Any attempt to restate the Gospel in any other form will result in the Gospel being distorted, even to the point where it is no longer the Gospel. How would you respond to this kind of reasoning?

3. What is the context and meaning of Philippians 2:5-11? How does it give insight into Paul's thinking and the mentality of Jesus? (Sunday's lesson) What is the lesson for us as individuals and as a community?
4. Monday's lesson highlights the call of Peter & John (Matthew 4:18-20), and Matthew (Matthew 9:9). Tuesday's lesson focuses on the transformation and subsequent mission of Paul (Acts 9; 28). Wednesday's and Thursday's lessons talk about the second call and commissioning of Peter (John 21:15-19).
5. Some churches want to be "in the community" yet refer to the community as 'them'. If an "us and them" dynamic is created, do you imagine that the community may find it difficult to relate and/or accept what is being offered?
6. As God's children, we see ourselves as pilgrims and exiles here on earth. But being part of the kingdom of God also means that we must seek the peace of the land in which we dwell. When we engage in our modern culture we can work together in seeking the good of our earthly city.
7. Many churches have adopted this approach and are doing amazing things to serve their communities. When we view our efforts in the community as "amazing grace" without expecting anything in return, we realize that there is a return because true grace is transformative. People's lives are changed, and "peace" flourishes. And this is also true for us as individuals.
8. Mark Mittelberg finds six basic styles of witnessing within the New Testament: Confrontational (Peter in Acts 2), Intellectual (Paul in Acts 17), Testimonial (the blind man in John 9), Interpersonal (Matthew in Luke 5), Invitational (Woman at the well in John 4), Serving (Dorcas in Acts 9). Which of them looks more like you?
9. Each one of us is a unique individual, God's masterpiece (Ephesians 2:1-10). Therefore, your God-given role is where your heart's greatest gladness and the world's deepest needs meet. Then your individual story, embedded in God's greater story will make a difference for all eternity!
10. Your life can be part of something bigger that God is creating now and that will last for all eternity.

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

When reading Philippians for next time, of all the things in there, I'm sure you'll notice the second chapter, where there's such a contrast between Satan's ambitions and Christ's amazing willingness to condescend. That's the passage where Christ, who though he was God, was willing to lower himself to our level. Contrast that with Satan, who though he was a mere creature, said, "I will be like God. I will sit in the sides of the north." And he said to the Son of God, "On your knees and worship me." The contrast in Philippians 2 is so eloquent. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Ephesians and Colossians,

recorded May 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/67MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/68MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

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

Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men. {5BC 1131.1}

Never was there such an evangelist as Christ. He was the Majesty of heaven, but He humbled Himself to take our nature, that He might meet men where they were. To all people, rich and poor, free and bond, Christ, the Messenger of the covenant, brought the tidings of salvation. His fame as the Great Healer spread throughout Palestine. The sick came to the places through which He would pass, that they might call on Him for help. Hither, too, came many anxious to hear His words and to receive a touch of His hand. Thus He went from city to city, from town to town, preaching the gospel and healing the sick—the King of glory in the lowly garb of humanity. {MH 22.1}

God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. {MH 479.2}

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me." {MH 143.3}

Man needs a power outside of and beyond himself, to restore him to the likeness of God, and enable him to do the work of God; but this does not make the human agency unessential. Humanity lays hold upon divine power, Christ dwells in the heart by faith; and through co-operation with the divine, the power of man becomes efficient for good. {DA 296.4}

God is not dependent upon men for the advancement of His cause. He might have made angels the ambassadors of His truth. He might have made known His will, as He proclaimed the law from Sinai with His own voice. But in order to cultivate a spirit of benevolence in us, He has chosen to employ men to do this work. {CS 20.1}

Human agencies are the hands of heavenly instrumentalities, for heavenly angels employ human hands in practical ministry. . . . By uniting with these powers that are omnipotent, we are benefited by their higher education and experience. Thus, as we become partakers of the

divine nature and separate selfishness from our lives, special talents for helping one another are granted us. . . . {HP 102.4}

The Saviour's manner of dealing with Peter had a lesson for him and his brethren. Although Peter had denied his Lord, the love which Jesus bore him had never faltered. And as the apostle should take up the work of ministering the Word to others, he was to meet the transgressor with patience, sympathy, and forgiving love. Remembering his own weakness and failure, he was to deal with the sheep and lambs committed to his care as tenderly as Christ had dealt with him. . . . {RC 345.6}

He takes men as they are, with all their faults and weaknesses, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and taught by Him. {Ed 91.2}

Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us and bring us into communion with Him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of His hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with Him who made them all. {SC 85.1}

His heart was constantly burning with the love that brought Him from heaven to our world. His goodness and His power enabled Him to reveal in His life the truth that He came to this earth to bring to the fallen race. In every word, in every act, He manifested the love of God, cheering and encouraging the downcast and distressed. In heavenly wisdom He asserted His true majesty by bending all things to the present and future happiness of human beings. He came to teach men and women how to live, here below, the life of which He gave them an example—the life that will make them fit to enter the abodes of bliss. {UL 229.3}

When God gave His Son to our world, He endowed human beings with imperishable riches—riches compared with which the treasured wealth of men since the world began is nothingness. Christ came to the earth and stood before the children of men with the hoarded love of eternity, and this is the treasure that, through our connection with Him, we are to receive, to reveal, and to impart. {MH 37.1}