

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Fourth Quarter 2020: *Education*

Lesson 11 “The Christian *and* Work”

Read for this week’s study

Genesis 3:19; Deuteronomy 16:15; Exodus 25:10–30:38; Galatians 5:22–26; Ecclesiastes 9:10; 1 Corinthians 10:31.

Memory Text

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Many Sides of Work
- III. Work and Nurture
- IV. Work and Excellence
- V. Work and Spirituality
- VI. Work and Stewardship
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “In this “in-between time” (after the ideal world and prior to the promised one), we are invited to view work as one of God’s blessings. [...] This week we will look at the whole question of work and its role in Christian education. (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Sunday’s lesson compares the role of work before and after the Fall. What is the significance of the fact that God gave both Adam and Eve work even before the Fall? Interestingly, the work is in the context of relationships (Genesis 2 & 3). If work is divested of the relational part, if it becomes a goal in itself, or a source of identity or status, it will destroy God’s image in you and you will diminish God’s image in others.
3. What is the significance of the “work of our hand”? (Monday’s lesson) What is the implication that God works with his hands (Genesis 2:7) in a society which despised manual labor? Work is a gracious expression of creative energy in service of others.

4. What can we learn from the building of the tabernacle (Exodus 25-30) about the attention to detail and excellence? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. What is the connection between work and spirituality (Wednesday's lesson) and work and stewardship (Thursday's lesson)?
6. In medieval Christianity there was a sharp distinction between sacred and secular vocations. If you really wanted to serve the Lord, you became either a monk or a nun. Reformers changed that by teaching that any vocation that a person rendered to God was a sacred vocation that God "called" us to do. Puritans entered into scientific pursuits with religious zeal and viewed their discoveries as a means of glorifying God. But what they discovered put them on a collision course with the religious establishment which would not tolerate any challenge to their authority.
7. In the last lesson we spoke about the impact of the Scientific Revolution on education and humankind. The Industrial Revolution bequeathed the production line model of education: In a large building, there are many identical rooms, each equipped with desks and chairs. At the sound of a bell, students go to one of these rooms with others all born in the same year. A professional teacher imparts as much information as possible. In that world a period of learning was followed by a period of working. In the first part you accumulated information that you used in the second part with minimal tweaking.
8. However in our world, the last thing a teacher needs to give her pupils is more information. They already have far too much of it. What they need is to make sense of information, to tell the difference between what is important and unimportant, and recognize fake news from real news. And above all they need to combine many bits of information into a broad picture of the world. They need critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity and emotional resilience.
9. To flourish in today's world, students need a lot of mental flexibility and emotional balance. They have to learn how to let go of what they "knew" and accept that there are things which are unknown. Unfortunately, teaching kids to embrace the unknown and to keep their mental balance is far more difficult than teaching them equations in physics or the causes of the Great Depression.
10. If any work that you do as for God is sacred, what are the options? A) Helping professions (ministry, medicine, nursing, aid work, social work, and volunteering with charities). B) Advocating professions (with politicians, journalists, think-tank or being people who are well placed to disseminate important ideas; Viktor Zhdanov). C) Research professions (improve the world by working on new ideas or technology). D) Giving professions (time, advice, experience, money to God/good causes, charities, altruism; Romans 12:8)
11. All of us can pray, grow, learn and develop in our journey to give the best we have. Our life can count for God, as we follow His lead, transforming the world into a better place!

Further Study with Ellen White

And the effort to bless others will react in blessings upon ourselves. This was the purpose of God in giving us a part to act in the plan of redemption. He has granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those who thus become participants in labors of love are brought nearest to their Creator. {SC 79.1}

Christ made full provision for the prosecution of the work entrusted to the disciples, and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe, but know that My presence will be there. Labor in faith and confidence, for the time will never come when I will forsake you. {8T 16.3}

To Adam was given the work of caring for the garden. The Creator knew that Adam could not be happy without employment. The beauty of the garden delighted him, but this was not enough. He must have labor to call into exercise the wonderful organs of the body. Had happiness consisted in doing nothing, man, in his state of holy innocence, would have been left unemployed. But He who created man knew what would be for his happiness; and no sooner had He created him than He gave him his appointed work. The promise of future glory, and the decree that man must toil for his daily bread, came from the same throne. {AH 27.2}

Through the ministry of the angels the Holy Spirit is enabled to work upon the mind and heart of the human agent and draw him to Christ. . . . But the Spirit of God does not interfere with the freedom of the human agent. The Holy Spirit is given to be a helper, so that man may cooperate with the Divine, and it is given to Him to draw the soul but never to force obedience. {TMK 57.2}

Christ is ready to impart all heavenly influences. He knows every temptation that comes to man, and the capabilities of each. He weighs his strength. He sees the present and the future, and presents before the mind the obligations that should be met, and urges that common, earthly things shall not be permitted to be so absorbing that eternal things shall be lost out of the reckoning. The Lord has fullness of grace to bestow on every one that will receive of the heavenly gift. The Holy Spirit will bring the God-entrusted capabilities into Christ's service, and will mold and fashion the human agent according to the divine Pattern. {TMK 57.3}

The Holy Spirit is our efficiency in the work of character building, in forming characters after the divine similitude. When we think ourselves capable of molding our own experience, we make a great mistake. We can never of ourselves obtain the victory over temptation. But those who have genuine faith in Christ will be worked by the Holy Spirit. The soul in whose heart faith

abides will grow into a beautiful temple for the Lord. He is directed by the grace of Christ. Just in proportion as he depends on the Holy Spirit's teaching he will grow. {TMK 57.4}

The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not now see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. {TMK 57.5}

Your compassionate Redeemer is watching you in love and sympathy, ready to hear your prayers, and render you the assistance which you need in your life-work. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith and charity are the elements of the Christian character. These precious graces are the fruits of the Spirit. They are the Christian's crown and shield. . . . Nothing can give more perfect content and satisfaction. {SD 32.4}

Thus it is with the truly righteous man. He is unconscious of his goodness and piety. Religious principle has become the spring of his life and conduct, and it is just as natural for him to bear the fruits of the Spirit as for the fig tree to bear figs or for the rosebush to yield roses. His nature is so thoroughly imbued with love for God and his fellow men that he works the works of Christ with a willing heart. {SL 13.1}

All who come within the sphere of his influence perceive the beauty and fragrance of his Christian life, while he himself is unconscious of it, for it is in harmony with his habits and inclinations. He prays for divine light, and loves to walk in that light. It is his meat and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father. His life is hid with Christ in God; yet he does not boast of this, nor seem conscious of it. God smiles upon the humble and lowly ones who follow closely in the footsteps of the Master. Angels are attracted to them, and love to linger about their path. They may be passed by as unworthy of notice by those who claim exalted attainments and who delight in making prominent their good works, but heavenly angels bend lovingly over them and are as a wall of fire round about them. {SL 13.2}

The religion of Jesus Christ is not merely to prepare us for the future immortal life; it is to enable us to live the Christ life here on earth. Jesus is not only our pattern, He is also our friend and our guide, and by taking hold of His strong arm and partaking of His Spirit, we may walk "even as he walked." {TMK 298.6}