

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Third Quarter 2022: *In the Crucible With Christ*
Lesson 10 “Meekness in the Crucible”

Read for this week’s study

Ezekiel 24:15-27; Exodus 32:1-14; Matthew 5:43-48; 1 Peter 2:18-25; Psalm 62:1-8.

Memory Text

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Broken Bread and Poured-out Wine
- III. Interceding for Grace
- IV. Loving Those Who Hurt Us
- V. A Closed Mouth
- VI. Our Rock and Refuge
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “Meekness, which is defined as ‘enduring injury with patience and without resentment’, is one of the most powerful characteristics of Jesus and His followers. And yet, it’s not an end in itself: meekness of spirit can be a powerful weapon in the hands of those who are in the midst of pain and suffering.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Why is meekness considered to be one of the most powerful characteristics of Jesus and His followers? Why would a “weapon” be needed in the midst of pain and suffering?
3. What do you think about the following statement? “Indeed, the crucible is a great place to learn meekness of heart, for through our own meekness and broken places we can be powerful witnesses for God.” (Sabbath afternoon)
4. Sunday’s lesson quotes Oswald Chambers who said that we are to become “broken bread and poured-out wine” for others. What do you think is meant by this? In what ways is Christ’s experience similar to our experience (cf. 2 Timothy 4:6) and to what extent was His experience different and unique?

5. What is happening in Ezekiel 24:15-27? What was the purpose of this experience and of all of Ezekiel's ministry (24:24; cf. 3:22-27)?
6. Monday's lesson uses the story from Exodus 32:1-14 where Moses is interceding for grace: "In his own meekness, in his own selflessness in the midst of this crucible, Moses sought grace on behalf of those who certainly didn't deserve it."
7. What could the purpose of this story be in the context of Exodus? How can we show grace to those around us who seem to be the least deserving of it?
8. Tuesday's lesson explores Jesus' call to love and pray for our enemies in Matthew 5:43-48. What is the point that Jesus is teaching here? What does it mean in this context when Jesus says: "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48)?
9. Wednesday's lesson urges us to consider the example of Jesus who when questioned by Caiaphas and Pilate, could have said a lot of things to correct the situation and to justify Himself, but He didn't. His silence was a testimony to His meekness. Based on this, Peter is offering some surprising advice to slaves in 1 Peter 2:18-25. How can silence in the face of unjust suffering be a greater witness to the glory of God than "putting people right"?
10. What steps do we need to take towards a proper application of this for our [different] times? What sort of misunderstanding and misapplication do we face if we use shortcuts, "plain reading" or are not responsible with this process? Do you think Peter is suggesting that people remain passive while suffering violence as a "one size fits all" solution to all of life's problems? If not, how do we know that?
11. What spiritual principles can we learn from what David is saying in Psalm 62:1-8? How can our sense of security, worthiness, and acceptance, especially in times of distress and suffering, be firmly grounded on God as our Rock and Refuge?
12. Suffering is a part of living. This life owes us nothing. It doesn't matter how positive we are or how much we want something, reality will catch up with us. As Ernest Hemingway famously said, the world eventually breaks everyone (and kills those it doesn't break). Everyone can be broken by the circumstances of life, but sometimes people "become stronger in the broken places". As it has been said, it is not how many times you get knocked down, but it is how many times you get up that matters. How can we face life's challenges head on this week with God's help? We can be sure the challenges are coming and that they will be tough. How can we use that experience to reform, revise, and stand tall so that we are stronger in those broken places?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Do you remember when God said to Moses, "I'm tired of these people. Step aside; let me destroy them, and I'll make a great nation of you." Who said, "God, but think about your name; think about your reputation?" See, Moses understood. Some people suggest he didn't understand too well. The knowledge of God was barely evolving in those days. Oh, how well he knew God! God could talk face-to-face with him as with who else in history? And the first mark of a really knowledgeable friend is jealousy for your reputation. And Moses says, "God, but what about your name?" And you remember Moses' argument? "The heathen will say you brought your people out into the wilderness but then you couldn't get them into the Promised Land. You'll lose ground, God; don't do it. Destroy me if that would help." He offered. It wouldn't have helped. But that's the feeling Moses had for the people. And God could have said, "Moses, who else knows me the way you do?" Of course, Job was jealous of God's name too, wasn't he? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Ezekiel, recorded February 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/37MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/38MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

There are a lot of people who want God to go by the rule of 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'. I've heard folks say if Idi Amin does not get what he richly deserves, they will be very disappointed in God. They like that 'eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' on everybody else.

Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all. And Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay", says the Lord.

Now, we will appropriate that verse depending upon what we know about God and the larger view that you've talked about. If you have the larger view that we speak of, God loves your enemies as much as he loves you. God promises to take care of this matter of vengeance. But God says, "Please don't do it yourself. You don't love that person the way I do." We have to realize that our enemies are also God's children. And God says, "Yes, I will do something about this. I'll take care of it. Leave it up to me, please. I'll discipline those whom I love. Let me treat your enemies as their Father, as I'm yours. Would you mind it if I so disciplined your enemy that maybe I might win him? Would you mind?"

See, if we leave vengeance up to God, he might do something to this other person. He might discipline this wayward son who has been mistreating King David. He might treat him in such a

way that he would respond, and he might be won. And God is saying to us, “Yes, leave vengeance up to me. I will repay. But if, having left it up to me, and I treat this enemy of yours in such a way that he winds up in the Kingdom, when you find him, there, will you be disappointed? Will you be angry with me? Will you come up to me in the hereafter and say, ‘Wait a minute, I clung to that precious promise. You promised me vengeance on my enemies, and I find he’s here; that’s not fair?’”

And God says, “You really don’t know anything about me or what I’m trying to accomplish in my family. You see, with your shortsightedness, you would be satisfied with just a good old vengeance right now and get rid of that person. I don’t like to lose one of my children. So please leave the vengeance to me. It might be I’ll win this sinful child who is abusing you. And I don’t like what he’s doing either. But just as I won you, maybe I could win him.” {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Psalms*, recorded January 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/27MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/28MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

With intense interest the unfallen worlds had watched to see Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth. And if God should do this, Satan was ready to carry out his plan for securing to himself the allegiance of heavenly beings. He had declared that the principles of God’s government make forgiveness impossible. Had the world been destroyed, he would have claimed that his accusations were proved true. He was ready to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the worlds above. But instead of destroying the world, God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the alien province, a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace. Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race. Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled. {DA 37.2}

The Lord will not disappoint any who put their trust in Him. He will be first and last and best in everything to us. He will be a present help in every time of need. {RY 112.1}

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, can carry forward His great work harmoniously. That which appears to finite minds entangled and

complicated, the Lord's hand can keep in perfect order. He can devise ways and means to thwart the purposes of wicked counselors, and those who plot out mischief. {4BC 1161.1}

Through sincere prayer we are brought into connection with the mind of the Infinite. We may have no remarkable evidence at the time that the face of our Redeemer is bending over us in compassion and love, but this is even so. We may not feel His visible touch, but His hand is upon us in love and pitying tenderness. {SC 96.3}

This is the mystery of godliness. That Christ should take human nature, and by a life of humiliation elevate man in the scale of moral worth with God: that He should carry His adopted nature to the throne of God, and there present His children to the Father, to have conferred upon them an honor exceeding that conferred upon the angels,—this is the marvel of the heavenly universe, the mystery into which angels desire to look. This is love that melts the sinner's heart. . . . {SD 22.4}

While we rejoice that there are worlds which have never fallen, these worlds render praise and honor and glory to Jesus Christ for the plan of redemption to save the fallen sons of Adam, as well as to confirm themselves in their position and character of purity. The arm that raised the human family from the ruin which Satan has brought upon the race through his temptations, is the arm which has preserved the inhabitants of other worlds from sin. Every world throughout immensity engages the care and support of the Father and the Son; and this care is constantly exercised for fallen humanity. Christ is mediating in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds also is preserved by His mediatorial work. {MYP 254.1}

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship Him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love not only those who loved them, but those who hated them, who treated them despitefully. In this He was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted His teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul. {FE 177.1}

God is love. Like rays of light from the sun, love and light and joy flow out from Him to all His creatures. It is His nature to give. His very life is the outflow of unselfish love. {MB 77.2}

When we are united to Christ, we have the mind of Christ. Purity and love shine forth in the character, meekness and truth control the life. The very expression of the countenance is changed. Christ abiding in the soul exerts a transforming power, and the outward aspect bears witness to the peace and joy that reign within. {1SM 337.2}

By beholding we are to become changed; and as we meditate upon the perfections of the divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of His purity. 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}

The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices, they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. . . . {LHU 123.4}

The command, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," would never have been given if every provision had not been made whereby we may become as perfect in our sphere as God is in His. We are to be ever advancing from light to a greater light, holding fast what we have already received, and praying for more. Thus we shall never be left in darkness (*Review and Herald*, Apr. 12, 1892). {LHU 123.5}

Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by *trying* to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance. {COL 384.2}

The glory of heaven is in lifting up the fallen, comforting the distressed. And wherever Christ abides in human hearts, He will be revealed in the same way. Wherever it acts, the religion of Christ will bless. Wherever it works, there is brightness. {COL 386.1}

Christ brings all true believers into complete oneness with Himself, even the oneness which exists between Him and His Father. The true children of God are bound up with one another and with their Saviour. They are one with Christ in God. {SD 293.5}

True sanctification unites believers to Christ and to one another in the bonds of tender sympathy. This union causes to flow continually into the heart rich currents of Christlike love, which flows forth again in love for one another. {5BC 1141.2}

He who called the fisherman of Galilee is still calling men to His service. And He is just as willing to manifest His power through us as through the first disciples. However imperfect and sinful we may be, the Lord holds out to us the offer of partnership with Himself, of apprenticeship to Christ. He invites us to come under the divine instruction, that, uniting with Christ, we may work the works of God. {DA 297.1}

So long as we surrender the will to God, and trust in His strength and wisdom, we shall be guided in safe paths, to fulfill our appointed part in His great plan. {DA 209.2}

The world's Redeemer had a greater than angelic nature, yet united with His divine majesty were meekness and humility that attracted all to Himself. {MB 14.2}

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}

From earliest years to manhood, Christ lived a life that was a perfect pattern of humility and industry and obedience. He was always thoughtful and considerate of others, always self-denying. He came bearing the signature of heaven, not to be ministered unto, but to minister. . . {Ev 636.2}

The Son of God came to the world as a restorer. He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Every word He uttered was spirit and life. He spoke with authority, conscious of His power to bless humanity, and deliver the captives bound by Satan; conscious also that by His presence He could bring to the world fullness of joy. He longed to help every oppressed and suffering member of the human family, and show that it was His prerogative to bless, not to condemn. {LHU 37.2}

God's abounding love and presence will give you the power of self-control. He will mold and fashion your mind and character. He will direct your aims and purposes and capabilities in a channel that will give you moral and spiritual power which you will not have to leave here in this world but can carry with you and retain through eternal ages. {TMK 53.6}

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him. {SC 93.2}

While slander may blacken the reputation, it cannot stain the character. That is in God's keeping. So long as we do not consent to sin, there is no power, whether human or satanic, that can bring a stain upon the soul. A man whose heart is stayed upon God is just the same in the hour of his most afflicting trials and most discouraging surroundings as when he was in prosperity, when the light and favor of God seemed to be upon him. His words, his motives, his actions, may be misrepresented and falsified, but he does not mind it, because he has greater interests at stake. Like Moses, he endures as "seeing Him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27); looking "not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" (2 Corinthians 4:18). {MB 32.2}

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}

Without cause, men will become our enemies. The motives of the people of God will be misinterpreted, not only by the world, but by their own brethren. The Lord's servants will be put in hard places. A mountain will be made out of a molehill to justify men in pursuing a selfish, unrighteous course. . . . {UL 177.3}

By misrepresentation, these men will be clothed in the dark vestments of dishonesty, because circumstances beyond their control made their work perplexing. They will be pointed to as men that cannot be trusted. And this will be done by the members of the church. God's servants must arm themselves with the mind of Christ. They must not expect to escape insult and misjudgment. They will be called enthusiasts and fanatics. But let them not become discouraged. God's hand is on the wheel of His providence, guiding His work to the glory of His name. {UL 177.4}