

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Second Quarter 2019: *Family Seasons*

### Lesson 11 “Families of Faith”

#### Read for this week’s study

Acts 10:1–28, 34, 35; 1 Corinthians 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 22; John 1:12, 13; 3:7; 1 John 5:1.

#### Memory Text

“Therefore . . . let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1, 2, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Hold Fast What Is Good
- III. The Power of Culture on Family
- IV. Sustaining Families Through Seasons of Change
- V. Toward a First-Generation Faith
- VI. Twenty-First-Century Runners
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week we will look at how we can be ‘families of faith,’ as we seek to ‘become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world’ (Philippians 2:15, NKJV).” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. This lesson discusses the culture and its influence on families and religious faith: “Christian families confront cultural challenges all the time. Sometimes the cultural influences can be good; most times, though, the influence is negative. The great news is that the power of the gospel gives us light, comfort, and strength to deal with the challenges that culture can bring.” (Sabbath afternoon)
3. “Though every culture mirrors the fallen condition of the people within it, cultures may also have beliefs that are compatible with Scripture, even useful to the cause of the gospel. [. . .] At the same time, God’s truth must not be compromised. Church history sadly shows that compromise and accommodation to cultures has yielded a

patchwork of pseudo-Christian beliefs posing as authentic Christianity.” (Sunday’s lesson)

4. What is proper contextualization? It is not—as is often argued—“giving people what they want to hear.” Rather, it is laying out biblical principles and connecting them to current cultures and questions about life that people are asking. True contextualization also means providing that wisdom in language and models that people can comprehend, and through appeals and arguments they can identify with, even if they choose to reject them.
5. How much of our faith is shaped by our culture? How much of our faith is shaped by biblical truth? How do we discern between the two? Is it possible that we sometimes give Bible ‘answers’ with no regard for time, place or culture?
6. What can we learn about the way culture influenced the religion of Abraham, Sarah & Lot; Esther; Daniel and his three friends? (Tuesday’s lesson) What steps can we take to incorporate the biblical principles into our own culture and times, in ways that bring a new level of growth rather than distrust in God and loss of faith?
7. “Learning what one’s parents believe or what the church believes is not personal faith however. Being a Christian is more than belonging to an organization with a history and a dogma. True faith isn’t something genetic, isn’t something that is passed on naturally from one generation to another. Each one needs to know Christ for himself or herself.” (Wednesday’ lesson) Can first-generation faith be sustained? And if yes, then how?
8. “In his popular Bible paraphrase *The Message*, Eugene Peterson uses ‘message’ wherever the biblical word for ‘gospel’ appears. The good news about Jesus is truly *the message* still needed by the world today. [. . .] Christian families today join a long line of runners proclaiming, “ ‘He is risen,’ ” as He said (Matthew 28:7, NKJV). The reality of His resurrection makes credible everything else Jesus said about Himself, about God and His love for sinners, about forgiveness, and about the assurance of eternal life by faith in Him.” (Thursday’s lesson) What message needs to be given today? What is so special about Jesus’ resurrection?
9. How can a transforming view of God have a transforming influence on culture, both within and outside the church? What makes passing on faith to another generation or culture so challenging?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

If we make Sabbath just an issue over a day, we’ve got an arbitrary God. And when we say the Sabbath was given just to test our obedience, you can’t think of any reason for keeping it except that God says do it, the Sabbath then becomes a hindrance and a curse as it did to the Jews who were able to torture the Son of God to death and rush home to keep seventh-day Sabbath! Forbid we would be keeping Sabbath that way. They were only concerned that they

obey the code and the code said the seventh day is the Sabbath and you'd better obey God because you know what happens if you don't. And you know the nice things that happen if you do.

What kind of a relationship is that with God? Well, it might do for a little child with his tent pitched at the foot of Sinai, but it won't take us through the time of trouble when Satan comes as Christ and we need to be mature as Job was. So we need to review the Sabbath. The Sabbath sums up the good news. And when you keep the Sabbath knowing that information and you do it deliberately, maybe at risk of life in the end, it really represents the decision you've made about God. Of course, that decision is not just an opinion. It is a law we become like this person as we believe him wholeheartedly to be and we're changed. And we wind up loving God and our fellow men and remaining loyal to Jesus as described in the twelfth verse. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Three Angels' Messages*, #5, recorded October, 1981, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/5MM3ANGELSM>*

The Sabbath will be the central issue in the last great conflict. Over a day? No, it has to be the *meaning* of the day. Remember Sabbath keepers crucified Christ. So the mere recognition of the right day doesn't make me even a friend of God; I could be his enemy. Every gloomy Sabbath keeper lends his support to Satan's charges. Everyone who says, "Yes, I keep the right day and I enjoy it because God says I have to", you've got to think about that very, very carefully. You could be supporting Satan's charges. Sabbath is God's gift to us. The Sabbath and its meaning is mentioned all through Scripture following creation week, following the Exodus, following crucifixion week, mentioned in Hebrews as a type and a foretaste of the rest that comes through trusting God.

If every Sabbath we're reminded of the truth that was provided at such infinite cost and with such incredible patience, this truth and evidence that is the basis for our trust, then you can see that the meaningful observance of the Sabbath, when the devil has won the whole world to his side and to his lies and to reject all this truth about God; to keep the Sabbath then at risk of life really is saying to God and to the world and to ourselves, we accept the testimony of Jesus about his Father. We accept the evidence of all Scripture. We will not accept Satan's picture of God. God is not the kind of person his enemies have made him out to be. Then it's what the Sabbath represents that is the issue in the great controversy. Then keeping Sabbath, or a substitute Sabbath, may represent faith in the true Christ or in the substitute Christ. But it isn't so yet, worldwide, is it, because there are some devout Sunday keepers who have a better relationship with God than some unhappy or some careless Sabbath keepers. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Three Angels' Messages*, #6, recorded October,

1981, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/6MM3ANGELSM>*

### Further Study with Ellen White

When man dies to sin and is quickened to new life in Christ, divine love fills his heart; his understanding is sanctified; he drinks from an inexhaustible fountain of joy and knowledge, and the light of an eternal day shines upon his path, for with him continually is the Light of life.

{AA 273.2}

No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple courts, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's influence those who have been deluded by his deceptions, and places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. {PK 369.3}

Faith in a lie will not have a sanctifying influence upon the life or character. No error is truth, or can be made truth by repetition, or by faith in it. Sincerity will never save a soul from the consequences of believing an error. Without sincerity there is no true religion, but sincerity in a false religion will never save a man. I may be perfectly sincere in following a wrong road, but that will not make it the right road, or bring me to the place I wished to reach. The Lord does not want us to have a blind credulity, and call that the faith that sanctifies. The truth is the principle that sanctifies, and therefore it becomes us to know what is truth. We must compare spiritual things with spiritual. We must prove all things, but hold fast only that which is good, that which bears the divine credentials, which lays before us the true motives and principles which should prompt us to action.—Letter 12, 1890. {2SM 56.1}

Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of the gifts of heaven, and to exclude the rest of God's family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth. {RC 27.2}

The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life. {RC 27.3}

He passed by no human being as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. In whatever company He found Himself, He presented a lesson appropriate to the time and the circumstances. Every neglect or insult shown by men to their fellow men only made Him more conscious of their need of His divine-human sympathy. He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them manifest as the children of God. {RC 27.4}

Often He met those who had drifted under Satan's control, and who had no power to break from his snare. To such a one, discouraged, sick, tempted, fallen, Jesus would speak words of tenderest pity, words that were needed and could be understood. Others He met who were fighting a hand-to-hand battle with the adversary of souls. These He encouraged to persevere, assuring them that they would win; for angels of God were on their side, and would give them the victory. {RC 27.5}

At the table of the publicans He sat as an honored guest, by His sympathy and social kindness showing that He recognized the dignity of humanity; and men longed to become worthy of His confidence. Upon their thirsty hearts His words fell with blessed, life-giving power. New impulses were awakened, and to these outcasts of society there opened the possibility of a new life. {RC 27.6}

Though He was a Jew, Jesus mingled freely with the Samaritans. . . . And while He drew their hearts to Him by the tie of human sympathy, His divine grace brought to them the salvation which the Jews rejected.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 25, 26. {RC 27.7}

There is no caste with God. He ignores everything of the kind. All souls are of value with Him. Laboring for the salvation of the soul is employment worthy of the highest honor. It matters not what may be the form of our labor, or among what class, whether high or low. In God's sight these distinctions will not affect its true worth. The sincere, earnest, contrite soul, however ignorant, is precious in the sight of the Lord. He places His own signet upon men, judging, not by their rank, not by their wealth, not by their intellectual greatness, but by their oneness with Christ. The unlearned, the outcast, the slave, if he has made the most of his opportunities and privileges, if he has cherished the light given him of God, has done all that is required. The world may call him ignorant, but God calls him wise and good, and thus his name stands registered in the books of heaven. God will fit him up to do Him honor, not only in heaven, but on the earth. —*Gospel Workers*, p. 332. (1915) {Ev 566.1}

During His earthly ministry Christ began to break down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and to preach salvation to all mankind. Though He was a Jew, He mingled freely with the Samaritans, setting at nought the Pharisaic customs of the Jews with regard to this despised people. He slept under their roofs, ate at their tables, and taught in their streets. {AA 19.2}

The Lord has His eye upon every soul that is seeking Him. He is interested in every soul needing help, and He will not leave one in the darkness of error, but step by step will lead him into the full light of the truth that is shining from every page of the Scriptures. . . . The Lord sees our every act. He knows just what progress we have made in the Christian pathway. How kind, how tender, our Great Shepherd is! With intense interest He looks down from His exalted throne upon the sheep of His pasture, and gives them grace and strength. . . . {HP 322.3}

It is your privilege to trust in the love of Jesus for salvation, in the fullest, surest, noblest manner; to say, He loves me, He receives me; I will trust Him, for He gave His life for me. Nothing so dispels doubt as coming in contact with the character of Christ. He declares, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;" that is, there is no possibility of My casting him out, for I have pledged My word to receive him. Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory. {TM 517.2}

Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. The greater the sinner's guilt, the more he needs the Saviour. His heart of divine love and sympathy is drawn out most of all for the one who is the most hopelessly entangled in the snares of the enemy. {MH 89.3}

Wherever hearts are open to receive the truth, Christ is ready to instruct them. He reveals to them the Father, and the service acceptable to Him who reads the heart. For such He uses no parables. To them, as to the woman at the well, He says, "I that speak unto thee am He." {MH 28.2}

There will be peace, constant peace, flowing into the soul, for the rest is found in perfect submission to Jesus Christ. Obedience to God's will finds the rest. The disciple that treads in the meek and lowly steps of the Redeemer finds rest which the world cannot give, and the world cannot take away. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isaiah 26:3. {OHC 98.5}

The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people. He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amidst the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands. {PK 176.1}

God has a deep and earnest love for every member of the human family; not one is forgotten, not one is left helpless and deceived to be overcome by the enemy. And if those who have enlisted in the army of Christ will put on the whole armor of God, and wear it, they will be proof against all the assaults of the enemy. Those who really desire to be taught of God, and to walk in His way, have the sure promise that if they feel their lack of wisdom and ask of God, He will give liberally, and upbraid not. {FE 299.2}

Every weak, doubting, struggling soul who yields fully to the Lord is placed in direct touch with agencies that enable him to overcome. Heaven is near to him, and he has the support and help of angels of mercy in every time of trial and need. {AA 299.1}

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper. {DA 490.5}

But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands. {PK 570.4}

Heaven is very near those who suffer for righteousness' sake. Christ identifies His interests with the interests of His faithful people; He suffers in the person of His saints, and whoever touches His chosen ones touches Him. The power that is near to deliver from physical harm or distress is also near to save from the greater evil, making it possible for the servant of God to maintain his integrity under all circumstances, and to triumph through divine grace. {PK 545.3}

Consider the familiar relation Christ here brings to view as existing between the Father and His children. His presence and guardianship are an abiding thing. While we trust in Christ's saving power, all the arts and wiles of the fallen host can do nothing to harm us. Heavenly angels are constantly with us, guiding and protecting. God has ordained that we shall have His saving power with us, to enable us to do all His will. Let us grasp the promises and cherish them moment by moment. Let us believe that God means just what He says. {HP 32.2}

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. No one who in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but, thank God, we have a mighty Saviour, who cast out the evil one from heaven. {MH 94.3}

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan (MS 17, 1893). {7BC 922.5}

A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection, of His character. Christ in His self-denial, Christ in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness, Christ in His matchless love—this is the subject for the soul's contemplation. It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are to be transformed into His likeness. {SC 70.2}

Those who receive Him and believe in Him become the spiritual children of God. They are adopted into the royal family, and as they seek to do the will of God, they become conformed into His image. {SD 230.6}

God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper, than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? {COL 142.1}

Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God. It was to implant this love, to make us children of one family, that the King of glory became one with us. And when His parting words are fulfilled, "Love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12); when we love the world as He has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are fitted for heaven; for we have heaven in our hearts. {AG 54.6}

We may address Him by the endearing name, "Our Father," which is a sign of our affection for Him and a pledge of His tender regard and relationship to us. And the Son of God, beholding the heirs of grace, "is not ashamed to call them brethren." They have even a more sacred relationship to God than have the angels who have never fallen. {ML 365.3}

All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. {ML 365.4}

The Son of God came to this earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might learn to worship Him in spirit and in truth. He came to sow the world with truth. He held the

keys of 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. The Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, every phase of truth was evident to Him. {CT 28.2}

In the Teacher sent from God, heaven gave to men its best and greatest. He who had stood in the councils of the Most High, who had dwelt in the innermost sanctuary of the Eternal, was the One chosen to reveal in person to humanity the knowledge of God. {Ed 73.2}

God's greatest gift was bestowed to meet man's greatest need. The Light appeared when the world's darkness was deepest. Through false teaching the minds of men had long been turned away from God. In the prevailing systems of education, human philosophy had taken the place of divine revelation. Instead of the heaven-given standard of truth, men had accepted a standard of their own devising. From the Light of life they had turned aside to walk in the sparks of the fire which they had kindled. {Ed 74.1}

Christ came to this world as the expression of the very heart and mind and nature and character of God. He was the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of His person. But He laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and stepped down from His high command to take the place of a servant. He was rich, but for our sake, that we might have eternal riches, He became poor. He made the world, but so completely did He empty Himself that during His ministry He declared, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." {MM 19.1}

Christ presented to men that which was entirely contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the 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." John 3:16. 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 and treated them despitefully. In all 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. {CT 29.3}

In Christ the character of the Father was revealed. As children looked upon His countenance, they saw purity and goodness shining forth from His eyes. In His countenance gentleness, meekness, love, and conscious power were combined. But though every word, every gesture, every expression of His face, betokened His divine supremacy, humility marked His deportment and bearing. He came but for one purpose, and that was the salvation of the lost. {ML 300.4}

The fall of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent. Redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam, but an eternal purpose,

suffered to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world, but for the good of all the worlds that God had created. . . . {TMK 18.2}

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}

The gospel invitation is not to be narrowed down and presented only to a select few, who, we suppose, will do us honor if they accept it. The message is to be given to all. When God blesses His children, it is not alone for their own sake, but for the world's sake. As He bestows His gifts on us, it is that we may multiply them by imparting. {MH 102.1}

The Samaritan woman who talked with Jesus at Jacob's well had no sooner found the Saviour than she brought others to Him. She proved herself a more effective missionary than His own disciples. The disciples saw nothing in Samaria to indicate that it was an encouraging field. Their thoughts were fixed upon a great work to be done in the future. They did not see that right around them was a harvest to be gathered. But through the woman whom they despised a whole cityful were brought to hear Jesus. She carried the light at once to her countrymen. {MH 102.2}

This woman represents the working of a practical faith in Christ. Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. No sooner does he come to know the Saviour than he desires to make others acquainted with Him. The saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver. The grace of Christ in the soul is like a spring in the desert, welling up to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish eager to drink of the water of life. In doing this work a greater blessing is received than if we work merely to benefit ourselves. It is in working to spread the good news of salvation that we are brought near to the Saviour. {MH 102.3}

The Saviour is still carrying forward the same work as when He proffered the water of life to the woman of Samaria. Those who call themselves His followers may despise and shun the outcast ones; but no circumstance of birth or nationality, no condition of life, can turn away His love from the children of men. To every soul, however sinful, Jesus says, If thou hadst asked of Me, I would have given thee living water. {DA 194.1}

Those who take up their appointed work will not only be a blessing to others, but they will themselves be blessed. The consciousness of duty well done will have a reflex influence upon their own souls. The despondent will forget their despondency, the weak will become strong, the ignorant intelligent, and all will find an unfailing helper in Him who has called them. {MH 148.3}

Christ exalted the character of God, attributing to him the praise, and giving to him the credit, of the whole purpose of his own mission on earth,—to set men right through the revelation of God. In Christ was arrayed before men the paternal grace and the matchless perfections of the Father. In his prayer just before his crucifixion, he declared, “I have manifested thy name.” “I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” When the object of his mission was attained,—the revelation of God to the world,—the Son of God announced that his work was accomplished, and that the character of the Father was made manifest to men. {ST, January 20, 1890 par. 9}

Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, humbling Himself, veiling His glory, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed. . . . In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize God. In sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father. {TMK 338.4}

**Recommended Reading:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, chapter 3 “The Great Commission”  
<https://egwwritings.org/>