

## **Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**

### **Second Quarter 2019: *Family Seasons***

#### **Lesson 1 “The Rhythms of Life”**

#### **Read for this week’s study**

Genesis 1; Genesis 8:22; Psalm 90:10; Job 1:13–19; Acts 9:1–22; Philippians 1:6; Romans 8:1.

#### **Memory Text**

“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. In the Beginning
- III. The Rhythms of Life
- IV. The Unexpected
- V. Transitions
- VI. Interactions
- VII. Further Study

#### **Questions and Notes for Consideration**

##### **Facilitator: Daniel Duda**

1. “This quarter’s lessons are about the cycles of life, at least for us now, in this fallen world. And we are going to look at these cycles in the one place most of us cycle through them, and that is within the framework of family.” (Introduction to the quarter)
2. “Our lives go through stages, through changes, and they do so from the moment we are born. Sometimes the changes are good, sometimes not; sometimes we have control over them; sometimes not. This week let’s look at the seasons and rhythms of our lives, especially as they impact us and our families, too.” (Sabbath afternoon)
3. Given the position of our planet in its orbit, the natural world is full of daily, monthly and annual rhythms. Why are these rhythms or cycles so important? Is it significant that humans can, to some extent, cognitively override these hard-wired rhythms? Are there some things which are dictated by the biological clock and thus cannot be overridden?
4. “The Bible begins at the beginning, which is no doubt why it begins with the words (actually one word in the Hebrew), ‘In the beginning...’ (Genesis 1:1). The particular

focus of the chapter, of course, is the transformation of the earth from a state of being 'without form, and void' (Genesis 1:2) to the world that God Himself, on the sixth day, declared 'very good' (Genesis 1:31). In short, the beginning here is the beginning of our world." (Sunday's lesson) What is the significance of the beginning? What did it mean for the original readers and what does it mean for us?

5. How does our understanding of the "beginning" influence our perception of reality, God, humankind and the nature of the problem in the universe? As marriage and Sabbath come to us from Eden [=before the Fall], they have the greatest potential to be blessings; and [therefore] are understandably under a severe attack from Satan.
6. What does our understanding of the beginning tell us about God, His *motives* (why did he create) and His *methods* (how he runs the universe)?
7. "Between the two bookends of life, birth and death, we all go through a variety of seasons, different for each individual. [...] Each one of us is an individual, and thus, differences will exist in each one of our lives. In a sense, too, these differences are important because they make each one of us unique, which means each one of us has something to share that others don't have. In short, our differences allow us to be a blessing to others. [...] Whatever stage we are in, and no matter our differences, we all have something to offer, not just to the Lord, but to each other, as well." (Monday's lesson)
8. How does our understanding of the Bible as a storyline help us to see our lives in a similar way? In what ways can we contribute to both our immediate and larger communities?
9. "Who among us hasn't experienced the unexpected, in a very negative way, too? Life can be going along just fine when, suddenly and without warning, everything completely changes, and our lives—and our family's lives—might never be the same again." (Tuesday's lesson) How can your faith (=picture of God) help you amid the trials that unexpectedly interrupt the rhythms of your life?
10. Aside from the unexpected events, how do the transitions in our lives provide an opportunity for God to work on changing us? (See Wednesday's lesson.) Which biblical character would you choose as an illustration of having impact on others?
11. What is the impact (and limitation) of our interactions with others? Which important principle(s) is Jesus illustrating in Luke 11:34 & Mark 4:24-25?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

I wonder if tonight we could think back in imagination to the very dramatic events of that first week of this earth's history. The war had begun already in heaven. Satan had already leveled his charges and his accusations. One third of the angels had already agreed with him that God is not worthy of our love and our trust. Right in the middle of that devastating crisis, God invites

his family to watch him as He creates yet another world—this time, ours. How easily he could have created our world with a snap of his fingers, in just an instant of time.

But in the dramatic and significant setting of the great controversy, he chose this time to do it in six twenty-four hour days. On the first day, all he said was “Let there be light.” That’s all. And then day two, three, four, five, as God in unhurried majesty and drama unfolded his plans for our earth. By the sixth day, what a beautiful place this was. Where now were Satan’s charges that God was selfish? Look at the freedom. He created us in his own image with power to think and to do. And we know from human history that he created us free to either love and trust him, or hate him and spit in his face, because it has been done. And he created us able to do it! God even allowed Satan to approach our first parents at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And he didn’t hide that tree in some dark corner of the garden; he put it right in the middle near the tree of life, so that Adam and Eve would see it every time they came to that other tree.

Look in Genesis 2:9 on the reference sheet: “In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (NIV)

Of course the God we know could be trusted not to allow our first inexperienced parents to be tested more than they were able to resist. You know he would not do that. And so Satan was only allowed to approach them at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve were warned not to risk a confrontation with their wily foe. Isn’t that the meaning of that famous key text, next on the list, in 1 Corinthians 10:13? “But God keeps his promise [or God can be trusted], and he will not allow you to be tested beyond your power to remain firm.” (GNB)

You see, that tree was not put there as a test of obedience—an arbitrary test of obedience. That tree was put there to help them, to protect them. The tree of knowledge of good and evil was not placed there before sin, but after sin. If it was before sin, it was an arbitrary test. After sin, it was to help them and protect them like every other one of God’s gracious laws. Then God stunned the universe by sharing with us, as far as he possibly could with mere created human beings, some of his own marvelous creative power. God so designed it that when a man and a woman come together in love, they are able to share life with little people; create little people in their own image. Isn’t it interesting to watch our children and our grandchildren? They look so much like us. They behave like us, at our best points and our worst points. Truly, they do reflect our image and God designed it to be this way. You recall God’s words there in Genesis 1:28:

Have many children [I wonder what He would say to us now], have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. (GNB)

That was his original plan. The Song of Solomon right in the middle of the Bible reminds us that this whole thing was God’s idea. That we should be male and female and feel the way we do

about each other, and say the things we do to each other, and come together in love, and create little people in our own image. He thought that all up himself.

You know he could have created us to look like E.T., or little green people with antennae from Mars. Just think what he might have done. And babies could have come in test tubes or one of these other ways that are being devised. No, not the way that God designed it. It worries some people. Other people say, “What kind of a God must he be to think it up this way?” And then put a whole book in the middle of the Bible that worries some people and delights others? Think what the Song of Solomon says about our God; reminding us of that creation week and of the Sabbath that came at the end of it.

The universe watched all this, the universe that had heard the charges against God. They watched all this and when it was over they said, “That’s very good.” Love and admiration for God must have known no bounds. Where now were Satan’s charges that God does not respect the freedom of his creatures? Or that he’s very selfish in his use of authority and power? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #10, “The Reminder of the Evidence” recorded March, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>*

It seems to me that if God really were our friend, we would take time to talk about these things and to be more specific about them, as we would with other members of the family. We might even venture to ask him about the thorns on the rose. “Did you put them there? If so, why?” Or is it all right to ask questions of our God? Job did, and he honored God with his confidence. You remember how boldly, but reverently, Job agonized with God—to the consternation of his friends. They worried that God would surely smite Job for daring to talk to the father like this.

The whole book of Job is on this subject. I have picked just one place. Look at Job 29:2-4 and 30:20. Job cries to God:

If only my life could once again be as it was when God watched over me. God was always with me then . . . and the friendship of God protected my home . . . [But now] I call to you, O God, but you never answer, and when I pray, you pay no attention. (GNB)

How that worried Job’s friends! But was God offended? No, look at our next verse, Job 42:7. God said to the three friends, who were so worried: “You did not speak the truth about me the way my servant Job did.” (GNB) You see, Job knew God, and he honored God with those cries. God was not talking to him just then. And Job was deeply upset because their friendship seemed to be at an end. So what upset the friends complemented God, and spoke well of their relationship.

Now surely there are serious questions we, too could ask in these modern times about our God. You think of the accidents that happen, sometimes to the best people among us; could you name a few? Is it that the guardian angels are beginning to relax their protection? Serious questions about God often arise in a great medical center like this. Why is it that God sometimes does not heal his trusting friends, even though we ask him to? I believe that God, as we know him, might well say to us, "Trust me. I can't explain it to you just now. I hope you trust me enough to be willing to wait for the day when I can make it plain to you. I hope you have found enough evidence and enough reason for trusting me that much. Besides, you know I would never allow you to be tried and tested more than you are able to bear." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #15, "Talking to God as a Friend" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/15MMCAG>*

Imagine living in a community where everyone lives as described in the Ten Commandments! That means everybody loves God and everybody loves everybody else; which means that no one is ever rude or arrogant, or impatient. No one insists on having his own way. Can you imagine living in such a community? Would you be free?

Then you go down to the details of the Decalogue. No one ever steals. No one ever kills. No one ever hates. No one ever lies. Everyone can be trusted. And even more than that, look at number ten. People not only never do anything wrong—no one ever *wants* to. That's the meaning of number ten, the one that bothered Paul so much at first. He thought God was interfering too much when he got in that deep. And finally, Paul said that *that* is what really guarantees our freedom. We will live in a place where people not only never do anything wrong, they will never even want to. That means they have really been healed.

And more than that, according to the first commandment, everyone loves and reveres the same God. What kind of a God do they worship and admire? Every member of God's family will admire the God who values nothing higher than the freedom of his children and who has paid such a price to prove it. They will worship a God who asks for nothing more than mutual love and trust. That produces a unity that is inherent in our faith and the fact that we all love and worship the same God. When you have a group of people who live like that, you have real freedom, real peace, and real security. Seen in that light, the Decalogue is a guarantee of freedom. For God says, "I will always run my universe this way. I'd rather die than change it." Some of us say, "God, please, do not change it. Please, always run your universe in harmony with the principles of the Ten Commandments, or we won't be really safe and free." The only difference is that when the emergency is over, there will be no need for God to tell us to love each other and tell us to be decent neighbors. The spirit of truth will have convinced us that it is

only right and sensible to behave like that. That's the meaning of the law being written in our hearts, where a man does his thinking. That means we have thought this through. We agree with God. That's the best way to live. That's the best way to run the universe. It is right. That means that our self-control has been restored. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #12, "God's Law is No Threat to Our Freedom" recorded April, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/12MMCAG>*

### Further Study with Ellen White

The power of God is manifested in the beating of the heart, in the action of the lungs, and in the living currents that circulate through the thousand different channels of the body. We are indebted to Him for every moment of existence, and for all the comforts of life. The powers and abilities that elevate man above the lower creation, are the endowment of the Creator. {CS 17.1}

He loads us with His benefits. We are indebted to Him for the food we eat, the water we drink, the clothes we wear, the air we breathe. Without His special providence, the air would be filled with pestilence and poison. He is a bountiful benefactor and preserver. {CS 17.2}

The sun which shines upon the earth, and glorifies all nature, the weird, solemn radiance of the moon, the glories of the firmament, spangled with brilliant stars, the showers that refresh the land, and cause vegetation to flourish, the precious things of nature in all their varied richness, the lofty trees, the shrubs and plants, the waving grain, the blue sky, the green earth, the changes of day and night, the renewing seasons, all speak to man of his Creator's love. {CS 17.3}

He has linked us to Himself by all these tokens in heaven and in earth. He watches over us with more tenderness than does a mother over an afflicted child. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."—R. & H., Sept. 18, 1888. {CS 17.4}

In brier and thorn, in thistle and tare, is represented the evil that blights and mars. In singing bird and opening blossom, in rain and sunshine, in summer breeze and gentle dew, in ten thousand objects in nature, from the oak of the forest to the violet that blossoms at its root, is seen the love that restores. And nature still speaks to us of God's goodness. {Ed 101.3}

"I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil." Jeremiah 29:11. This is the message that, in the light from the cross, may be read upon all the face of nature. The heavens declare His glory, and the earth is full of His riches. {Ed 101.4}

When we are faithful in making God known, our impulses will be under divine supervision, and we shall make steady growth, spiritually and intellectually. {UL 81.4}

The savor of the salt represents the vital power of the Christian—the love of Jesus in the heart, the righteousness of Christ pervading the life. The love of Christ is diffusive and aggressive. If it is dwelling in us, it will flow out to others. We shall come close to them till their hearts are warmed by our unselfish interest and love. The sincere believers diffuse vital energy, which is penetrating and imparts new moral power to the souls for whom they labor. It is not the power of the man himself, but the power of the Holy Spirit that does the transforming work. {MB 36.2}

The Lord Jesus is our efficiency in all things; His Spirit is to be our inspiration; and as we place ourselves in His hands to be channels of light, our means of doing good will never be exhausted, for the resources of the power of Jesus Christ are to be at our command. We may draw upon His fullness and receive of that grace which has no limit. The Captain of our salvation at every step would teach us that almighty power is at the demand of living faith. He says, “Without me ye can do nothing;” but again declares that “greater works than these shall ye do; because I go unto my Father.” {HP 319.4}

All who have chosen God’s service are to rest in His care. Christ pointed to the birds flying in the heavens, to the flowers of the field, and bade His hearers consider these objects of God’s creation. “Are not ye of much more value than they?” He said. Matthew 6:26, R. V. The measure of divine attention bestowed on any object is proportionate to its rank in the scale of being. The little brown sparrow is watched over by Providence. The flowers of the field, the grass that carpets the earth, share the notice and care of our heavenly Father. The great Master Artist has taken thought for the lilies, making them so beautiful that they outshine the glory of Solomon. How much more does He care for man, who is the image and glory of God. He longs to see His children reveal a character after His similitude. As the sunbeam imparts to the flowers their varied and delicate tints, so does God impart to the soul the beauty of His own character. {DA 313.2}

All who choose Christ’s kingdom of love and righteousness and peace, making its interest paramount to all other, are linked to the world above, and every blessing needed for this life is theirs. {DA 313.3}

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. {8T 19.1}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ. {MH 419.1}

“I and My Father are one,” Christ declared. “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” John 10:30; Matthew 11:27. {MH 419.2}

Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. In the heavens above, in the earth, in the broad waters of the ocean, we see the handiwork of God. All created things testify to His power, His wisdom, His love. Yet not from the stars or the ocean or the cataract can we learn of the personality of God as it was revealed in Christ. {MH 419.3}

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to manifest, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. {MH 419.4}

As the wheellike complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of this earth. {PK 536.1}

When the Christian takes his baptismal vow, divine help is pledged to him. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit stand ready to work in his behalf. God places at his command the resources of heaven, that he may be an overcomer. His own power is small; but God is omnipotent, and God is his helper. Daily he is to make known his wants at the throne of grace. By faith and trust, by availing himself of the resources provided, he can be more than a conqueror. {OHC 157.5}

The Lord does not leave His wounded and bruised sheep to the power of Satan to be torn in pieces. He is ever strengthening His own when they are weak. He delivers the tried and tempted ones from the enemy’s power. The Lord Jesus never forsakes any soul that puts his trust in Him. {UL 150.4}

The souls of those who love Jesus will be surrounded with a pure, fragrant atmosphere. There are those who hide their soul hunger. These will be greatly helped by a tender word or a kind remembrance. The heavenly gifts, freely and richly bestowed by God, are in turn to be freely bestowed by us upon all who come within the sphere of our influence. Thus we reveal a love that is heaven-born, and which will increase as it is freely used in blessing others. Thus we glorify God. {OHC 231.5}

And while Christ opens heaven to man, the life which He imparts opens the heart of man to heaven. Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. All this work of evil it is Christ’s mission to undo. The faculties of the soul, paralyzed by sin, the darkened mind, the perverted will, He has power to invigorate and to restore. He opens to us the riches of the universe, and by Him the power to discern and to appropriate these treasures is imparted. {Ed 28.3}



God's healing power runs all through nature. If a tree is cut, if a human being is wounded or breaks a bone, nature begins at once to repair the injury. Even before the need exists, the healing agencies are in readiness; and as soon as a part is wounded, every energy is bent to the work of restoration. So it is in the spiritual realm. Before sin created the need, God had provided the remedy. Every soul that yields to temptation is wounded, bruised, by the adversary; but whenever there is sin, there is the Saviour. It is Christ's work "to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. {Ed 113.1}

Love's agencies have wonderful power, for they are divine. The soft answer that "turneth away wrath," the love that "suffereth long, and is kind," the charity that "covereth a multitude of sins" (Proverbs 15:1; 1 Corinthians 13:4, R.V.; 1 Peter 4:8, R.V.)—would we learn the lesson, with what power for healing would our lives be gifted! How life would be transformed, and the earth become a very likeness and foretaste of heaven! {Ed 114.1}

The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906). {6BC 1074.2}

All heaven has been looking on with interest, and ready to do whatever God might appoint, to help fallen men and women to become what God would have them. God will work for His children, but not without their cooperation. They must have indomitable energy, and a constant desire to become all that it is possible for them to be. {RC 296.3}

God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God, develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like his Master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. So quickened is he by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness, that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. {GW 285.3}

The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy,—joy in the Holy Spirit,—health-giving, life-giving joy. {MH 115.3}

Our Saviour's words, "Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28), are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills. Though men have brought suffering upon themselves by their own wrongdoing, He regards them with pity. In Him they may find help. He will do great things for those who trust in Him. {MH 115.4}

God does not control our minds without our consent; but every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart's unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who consent to enter into covenant with God are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature. {MH 93.1}

The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous one. Day by day God labors for man's sanctification, and man is to co-operate with Him, putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. He is to add grace to grace; and as he thus works on the plan of addition, God works for him on the plan of multiplication. Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them. {AA 532.2}

In all ages, through the medium of communion with heaven, God has worked out His purpose for His children, by unfolding gradually to their minds the doctrines of grace. His manner of imparting truth is illustrated in the words, "His going forth is prepared as the morning." Hosea 6:3. He who places himself where God can enlighten him, advances, as it were, from the partial obscurity of dawn to the full radiance of noonday. {AA 564.2}

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, or a day. It is a continual growth in grace. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. Satan lives, and is active, and every day we need to cry earnestly to God for help and strength to resist him. As long as Satan reigns we shall have self to subdue, besetments to overcome, and there is no stopping place, there is no point to which we can come and say we have fully attained. {1T 340.2}

God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning. {DA 311.2}

Sanctification means habitual communion with God. There is nothing so great and powerful as God's love for those who are His children. {HP 129.5}

Righteous words and deeds have a more powerful influence for good than all the sermons that can be preached.—ML 114. {VSS 52.1}

The voice and tongue are gifts from God, and if rightly used, they are a power for God. Words mean very much. They may express love, devotion, praise, melody to God, or hatred and revenge. Words reveal the sentiments of the heart. They may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The tongue is a world of blessing, or a world of iniquity. {SD 180.5}

Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man. {8T 286.4}

A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact. {MB 128.3}

The love of God alone can open and expand the heart, and give to love and sympathy a breadth and height that is without measure. Those who love Jesus will love all the children of God. The sense of personal infirmities and imperfections will lead the human agent to look away from self to Christ; and the Saviour's love will break down every cold, Pharisaical barrier, it will banish all harshness and selfishness, and there will be a blending of soul with soul, even with those who are opposite in temperament. {OHC 183.3}

God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, like the streams of water bursting from a living spring, blessings flow out from Him to all His creatures. And wherever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing. {SC 77.1}

He spoke a word of sympathy here and a word there as He saw men weary and compelled to bear heavy burdens. He shared their burdens and repeated to them the lessons He had learned from nature, of the love, the kindness, the goodness of God. He sought to inspire with hope the most rough and unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them manifest as children of God. . . . Jesus sat an honored guest at the table of the publicans, by His sympathy and social kindliness showing that He recognized the dignity of humanity; and men longed to become worthy of His confidence. Upon their thirsty souls His words fell with blessed, life-giving power. New impulses were awakened, and the possibility of a new life opened to these outcasts of society. {HP 181.3}

His [Christ's] work gave character to His mission, showing that it was of divine appointment. In His every word and act were revealed tender compassion, love, and mercy. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. He always noticed the little children, and they were attracted to Him. {UL 145.3}

To take people right where they are, whatever their position, whatever their condition, and help them in every way possible—this is gospel ministry. . . . Those who are sick in body are nearly always sick in soul, and when the soul is sick, the body is made sick.—MS. 62, 1900. {MM 238.1}

The sanctification of the soul by the working of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity. Gospel religion is Christ in the life—a living, active principle. It is the grace of Christ revealed in character and wrought out in good works. The principles of the gospel cannot be disconnected from any department of practical life. Every line of Christian experience and labor is to be a representation of the life of Christ. {COL 384.1}

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. “We love Him, because He first loved us.” In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. {AA 551.2}

It is a wonderful thought that human beings can speak the Word of God, in simple words of comfort and encouragement. The humblest instruments will be used of God to sow the seeds of truth, which may spring up and bear fruit, because the one in whose heart they were sown needed help—a kind thought, a kind word, made effective by the One who has said, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” —Letter 329a, Nov. 16, 1905, to her 19-year-old granddaughter Mabel. {TDG 329.6}