

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Second Quarter 2019: *Family Seasons*

#### Lesson 4 “When Alone”

#### Read for this week’s study

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12; Philippians 4:11–13; 1 Corinthians 7:25–34; Matthew 19:8; Genesis 37:34; Isaiah 54:5.

#### Memory Text

“And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him’ ” (Genesis 2:18, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Companionship
- III. The Unmarried Life
- IV. When a Marriage Ends
- V. Death and Loneliness
- VI. Spiritually Single
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week we will look at the question of companionship and loneliness at the various times of life that, perhaps, all of us have at some time faced. If not, then count yourself fortunate.” (Sabbath Afternoon)
2. “The closeness of God to Adam, in Eden, didn’t stop the Lord from saying “ ‘It is not good that man should be alone’ ” (Genesis 2:18, NKJV). Thus, God knew that Adam, even when he had fellowship with God in a world undamaged by sin, still needed human companionship. How much more, then, do the rest of us need companionship, as well.” (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Is the danger of experiencing loneliness nowadays significantly different than it was in the ancient societies? If yes, why is it so?
4. We are all wired differently: Extroverts get charged by being with other people, introverts get exhausted by other people. What is the role of introverts in the body of Christ? Do they also have their significance and a part to play? Or does true Christianity mean that all should be transformed into happy extroverts?

5. One reason some people are alone is that they are not married (Monday's lesson). How different is it to remain single in the 21<sup>st</sup> century from how it was being single in biblical times?
6. While putting appropriate emphasis on the importance of having a Christian family, how can we make sure that single people do not feel like second-class members at church?
7. "What family isn't, to some degree, dysfunctional? Outside of death, one of the hardest things a family can face is a divorce. People going through this terrible experience run a gamut of emotions. Probably the first and most common is grief, which, depending on the individuals, may last for several months to several years with different intensity." (Tuesday's lesson)
8. When people go through a divorce, how can the body of Christ be a non-judgmental community, and reach out to hurting people when they need that support the most? What can the church do to show care and support to widows and widowers?
9. "Not only do we all face the reality of our own death, we face the reality of the death of others, of loved ones, of maybe our closest companion. Hence, sooner or later, many of us will face a time, a season, of loneliness brought about by the death of someone else." (Wednesday's lesson) What can we do as individuals and as a community of faith to help those who suffer loneliness from the death of a loved one?
10. How can the church community be a blessing to those who are "spiritually single"? "These people, men or women, are married but attend church alone or only with their children. They may have married a person of a different faith. Or perhaps when they joined the church, their spouse did not. Or when married, both were members of the church, but one, for whatever reason, dropped out, stopped coming, and might even be hostile to the faith." (Thursday's lesson)
11. What practical things can we, as a church family, do to help the spiritually single in our midst? How can we be the hands and feet and caring arms of Jesus to those around us?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: Here's a question that was sparked by last week, I think, "Could you comment on the role of the family and marriage in God's overall plan for us, especially as we are called God's children? Also, is there special significance to our planet in having male and female, the two sexes?"

Graham: Yes, I think God deliberately designed things this way: the sexes, the family, sharing with us the power to create little people in our own image. Then we know how difficult it is to bring our children up and yet set them free. How can we keep them from hurting themselves

when they're little? Anyone who has had children, anyone who has been a teacher of little children, ought to be able to read the Bible very sympathetically. I think God gave this as a very eloquent demonstration. Right there in Eden the family, the sexes, the Sabbath, many things in that Garden were immediately emergency measures. Some emergency measures can be very pleasant, you know. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #11 with Lou Venden, "God's Emergency Measures" 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/11MMCAG>

Does Paul speak disrespectfully of marriage? Does he suggest you are more saintly if you are single? I see some heads nodding, and I heard somebody say no. Well, we'd better wait until we get to Corinthians, and see how we read him when we get to that point. Or is it just that there are certain practical things that one could do those days under the difficulties that prevailed during that emergency period if one did not have a large family in tow? Can you imagine Paul shipwrecked, with his wife and all the children? I mean, it would be very complicated! And so in Corinthians he says, "I'm saying this for practical reasons, because of the emergency." We need to read him with care there, too. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Luke, recorded April, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/55MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/56MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

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

After the creation of Adam every living creature was brought before him to receive its name; he saw that to each had been given a companion, but among them "there was not found an help meet for him." Among all the creatures that God had made on the earth, there was not one equal to man. And God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Man was not made to dwell in solitude; he was to be a social being. Without companionship the beautiful scenes and delightful employments of Eden would have failed to yield perfect happiness. Even communion with angels could not have satisfied his desire for sympathy and companionship. There was none of the same nature to love and to be loved. {PP 46.1}

God Himself gave Adam a companion. He provided "an help meet for him"—a helper corresponding to him—one who was fitted to be his companion, and who could be one with him in love and sympathy. Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of

his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was his second self, showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation. “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it.” Ephesians 5:29. “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one.” {PP 46.2}

We may commune with God in our hearts; we may walk in companionship with Christ. When engaged in our daily labor, we may breathe out our heart’s desire, inaudible to any human ear; but that word cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost. Nothing can drown the soul’s desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard. {GW 258.2}

Whatever be our condition in life, our business, we have a sure Guide. Whatever be our condition, He is our counselor. Whatever be our loneliness, He is our friend in whom we may ever trust. {OHC 56.6}

There is no comforter like Christ, so tender and so true. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. His Spirit speaks to the heart. Circumstances may separate us from our friends; the broad, restless ocean may roll between us and them. Though their sincere friendship may still exist, they may be unable to demonstrate it by doing for us that which would be gratefully received. But no circumstances, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always there, one given in Christ’s place, to act in His stead. He is always at our right hand, to speak soothing, gentle words, to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer. The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. This Spirit works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of this Spirit reveal its fruit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. {TMK 171.5}

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}

Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature

which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him. {6BC 1093.2}

Here they stand, and the finishing touch of immortality is put upon them, and they go up to meet their Lord in the air. The gates of the city of God swing back upon their hinges, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. There are the columns of angels on either side, and the ransomed of God walk in through the cherubims and seraphims. Christ bids them welcome and puts upon them His benediction. {6BC 1093.5}

There is no disappointment, no sorrow, no sin, no one who shall say, I am sick; there are no burial trains, no mourning, no death, no partings, no broken hearts; but Jesus is there, peace is there. There “they shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them.” Isaiah 49:10. {MB 17.4}

The conflict is over. All tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven as the redeemed stand around the throne of God. All take up the joyful strain, “Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.” {ML 348.4}

The resurrection of Jesus was a sample of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The risen body of the Saviour, His deportment, the accents of His speech, were all familiar to His followers. In like manner will those who sleep in Jesus rise again. We shall know our friends even as the disciples knew Jesus. Though they may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured in this mortal life, yet in their resurrected and glorified body their individual identity will be perfectly preserved, and we shall recognize, in the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, the lineaments of those we love. {TMK 362.3}

The Lord is in active communication with every part of His vast dominions. He is represented as bending toward the earth and its inhabitants. He is listening to every word that is uttered. He hears every groan; He listens to every prayer; He observes the movements of every one. . . . {ML 292.2}

It is true that disappointments will come; tribulation we must expect; but we are to commit everything, great and small, to God. He does not become perplexed by the multiplicity of our grievances, nor overpowered by the weight of our burdens. His watchcare extends to every household, and encircles every individual; He is concerned in all our business and our sorrows. He marks every tear; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. All the afflictions and trials that befall us here are permitted, to work out His purposes of love toward us—“that we might be partakers of His holiness,” and thus become participants in that fullness of joy which is found in His presence. {ML 292.5}

Through all your trials, which have never been fully revealed to others, you have had a never-failing Friend, who has said: “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” While upon

the earth, He was ever touched with human woe. Although He is now ascended to His Father, and is adored by angels who quickly obey His commands, His heart, which loved, pitied, and sympathized, knows no change. It remains a heart of unchangeable tenderness still. That same Jesus was acquainted with all your trials, and did not leave you alone to struggle with temptations, battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Through His angels He whispered to you: “‘Fear not, for I am with thee.’ ‘I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.’ I know your sorrows; I have endured them. I am acquainted with your struggles; I have experienced them. I know your temptations; I have encountered them. I have seen your tears; I also have wept. Your earthly hopes are crushed; but let the eye of faith be uplifted and penetrate the veil, and there anchor your hopes. The everlasting assurance shall be yours that you have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” {2T 271.1}

When Christ ascended to heaven, the sense of His presence was still with His followers. It was a personal presence, full of love and light. . . . {FLB 62.5}

Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the hearts of the children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them. The light, and love, and power of the indwelling Christ shone out through them, so that men, beholding, “marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13. All that Christ was to the disciples, He desires to be to His children today. {FLB 62.6}

We may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Receiving Christ, we are clothed with power. An indwelling Saviour makes His power our property. . . . Christ’s presence in the heart is a vitalizing power, strengthening the entire being. {FLB 62.7}