

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2025: *God's Love and Justice*
Lesson 4 "God Is Passionate *and* Compassionate"

Read for this week's study

Psalm 103:13; Isaiah 49:15; Hosea 11:1–9; Matthew 23:37; 2 Corinthians 11:2, 1 Corinthians 13:4–8.

Memory Text

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you’ ” (Isa. 49:15, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. More Than a Mother's Love
- III. Gut-Wrenching Love
- IV. The Compassion of Jesus
- V. A Jealous God?
- VI. Compassionate and Passionate
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. The title of the lesson this week is “God is Passionate and Compassionate.” What do these two adjectives mean and what is the difference between them as descriptions of God's character? Why did God make us emotional creatures? What is the role of emotion in God's plans for the human race? (Sabbath Afternoon's Lesson)
2. Read Psalm 103:13, Isaiah 49:15, and Jeremiah 31:20. What do each of these passages convey about the nature and depth of God's compassion? Some people might struggle with these comparisons because one or both of their parents were not loving. How would you illustrate God's compassion to people like them? (Sunday's Lesson)
3. Read Hosea 11:1-9. How does the imagery in these verses bring to life the way God loved and cared for Israel? How does the imagery in Hosea 1:2 relate to this

passage? Compare also the story in 1 Kings 3:25. How does the mother in this passage illustrate the point of Hosea 11? The lesson author states: “God is compassionate, but never to the exclusion of justice.” Do you agree or disagree? Why? (Monday’s Lesson)

4. Read Matthew 9:36, 14:14, and 23:37; Mark 1:41, and Luke 7:13. How do these verses shed light on the way Christ was moved by the plight of people? What impact should awareness of God’s compassion have on us? (Tuesday’s Lesson)
5. Read Deuteronomy 4:24. The God of the Bible is the compassionate God. But He is also called a “jealous” God. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4. Paul says there that “love is not jealous”. How do you reconcile the idea that God is love with the idea that God is jealous (2 Cor 11:2)? The lesson asks the question: “How can we learn to reflect that same kind of ‘good jealousy’ toward others that God displays toward us?” Do you think that is even possible in sinful human beings? (Wednesday’s Lesson)
6. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. How would you apply this passage to God? How can we become that kind of person? How helpful do you find Paul’s comments on this in 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13? What role might “death to self and selfishness” play in the process of living out what Paul counsels here? (Thursday’s Lesson)
7. Commenting on the “poor in spirit” beatitude in Matthew 5:3 and echoing the parable of the prodigal son, Ellen White says the following, “Whatever may have been your past experience, however discouraging your present circumstances, if you will come to Jesus just as you are, weak, helpless, and despairing, our compassionate Saviour will meet you a great way off, and will throw about you His arms of love and His robe of righteousness.” Does this lengthy sentence describe any particular incident in your personal history? Be prepared to share that experience. (Friday’s Lesson)
8. Throughout the Gospels Jesus was moved by the needs of people. He not only felt their pain (passion), but acted in a way that addressed their needs (compassion). What can we do to be more effective in meeting the needs that come to our attention? (Friday’s Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Graham: Yes. I enjoy when people say the fourth is arbitrary. How about number one? “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me, and I am a jealous God. I don’t like it when you have other gods.”

Lou: It’s sort of peevish, wanting to be the only one.

Graham: Well again, if you take the whole Bible and you are convinced of the kind of person God is, I am glad He says what He does. If He were not in support of freedom and the quality of life that He has revealed, then it would be arbitrary of Him. But God says, “Being the kind of

God I am, wishing nothing but the best for you, and valuing nothing more than your freedom, I don't want you to go after Dagon the fish god and Molech. Molech would require your babies burned alive in his hollow hands. And there are crocodiles and frogs in Egypt. And Ashtoreth and Baal—don't go after them. In fact, if you go after something abominable, you will become abominable yourself." God says, "Actually, if you make **Me** your God, then you will become ever more free, ever more intelligent. Don't hurt yourself."

Lou: It's a request. It's a plea. It is said out of love.

Graham. Right. But only if He is not arbitrary, only if God is the kind of person we believe Him to be. He says, "Don't lose your freedom and every other good thing you have by going after these degraded deities. Stay with Me. I am jealous; that is, I am jealous for you. I don't want you to be hurt." I like that.

Lou: Just as we would not want our children to have anything that would hurt them.

Graham: Isn't that kind of jealousy all right? I always felt my parents were jealous for my reputation. I derived great comfort from that. My mother wouldn't tell on me for anything. And so we have a God who is jealous for us, His children, and it's marvelous. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #7 with Lou Venden, "The Question of Authority" recorded February 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/7MMCAG>*

Lou: That does lead to another question: "Is it possible, since you put such importance on the basis of Scripture, on growing up, is it possible for a person to tell that he or she is in fact growing up?"

Graham: Since we've used 1 Corinthians 13 on the list, it would be appropriate to note that in the chapter where he says, "I once thought like a child, but now I've given up childish ways," that all the rest of the chapter is on how a grown-up behaves. That is, he loves. That is, love is never rude, never impatient, never arrogant, never boasts—look how little children boast, never insists on having its own way. Am I beginning to behave like a grownup? 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter, describes how a grown-up behaves.

I think there's an additional thing, too. Why am I behaving like this? Am I doing it because somebody in authority has told me to and He has power to reward and destroy? Or am I sold on the message of 1 Corinthians 13? I love how Jesus behaved that way. I would like to be like Him. I just agree with Him. He doesn't have to tell me anymore not to murder my mother-in-law. I don't like the idea myself, you see. So eventually we do what is right because it is right. That's all part of growing up.

Lou: You are saying, then, that there is a certain legitimacy in evaluating the way we act, the way we feel about other people, for example.

Graham: I think if we see no progress over the past year, we should be concerned.

Lou: Well, I was thinking about how my dad used to put marks on the wall. Did your dad do that?

Graham: Oh yes, had them all over the laundry wall.

Lou: And I was interested in whether I was growing more than Morrie. Morrie finally surpassed me.

Graham: I lost to my younger brother.

Lou: But there's a certain danger in focusing on our growth, isn't there, to where my whole concern is how am I doing? And I get my eyes off of . . .

Graham: That's why we need to go back to our earlier conversation, "God can completely heal the damage done." I mean, how does one grow up?

Lou: You don't grow by trying to grow.

Graham: We grow up into His likeness. But if I'm not thinking about Him . . .

Lou: How can you grow if you're looking at yourself and hoping to grow? And how can you avoid the self-confidence that comes in, for instance, with the Laodiceans who feel very content? I suppose if you'd ask a Laodicean, he'd say, "Well, I've really done quite well. I'm growing very nicely, thank you."

Graham: One of the evidences that one is growing up is that one is not becoming arrogant. There's nothing more stubborn than a little child. "My Daddy says it, and he's bigger than your Daddy, and therefore it's true." I would say it would be a mark of immaturity for a person of advanced years to be so self-satisfied and so arrogantly stubborn about his opinions. That suggests one is still a child. One grows up. One even enhances this quality of a child, the humility, the willingness to listen, to accept correction, to accept instruction. That should become even greater as one gets older. So an arrogant, "I think I've almost made it now," suggests one may not have even started. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #18 with Lou Venden, "God Waits for His Children to Grow Up" recorded June 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/18MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

He pointed His hearers to the Ruler of the universe, under the new name, “Our Father.” He would have them understand how tenderly the heart of God yearned over them. He teaches that God cares for every lost soul; that “like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” Psalm 103:13. Such a conception of God was never given to the world by any religion but that of the Bible. Heathenism teaches men to look upon the Supreme Being as an object of fear rather than of love—a malign deity to be appeased by sacrifices, rather than a Father pouring upon His children the gift of His love. Even the people of Israel had become so blinded to the precious teaching of the prophets concerning God that this revelation of His paternal love was as an original subject, a new gift to the world. {MB 74.1}

Jesus came into the world to illustrate the character of God in His own life, and He swept back the misrepresentations that Satan had originated, and revealed the glory of God. It was only by living among men that He could reveal the mercy, compassion, and love of His heavenly Father; for it was only by actions of benevolence that He could set forth the grace of God. The unbelief of men was deep seated, and yet they could not resist the testimony of His God-like example, and His deeds of love and truth. {SD 139.3}

God would not have His children, for whom so great a salvation has been provided, act as though He were a hard, exacting taskmaster. He is their best friend, and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them to bless and comfort them and fill their hearts with joy and love. The Lord desires His children to take comfort in His service, and to find more pleasure than hardship in His work. The Lord desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things. . . {TMK 263.3}

We dishonor God when we think of Him only as a judge ready to pass sentence upon us, and forget that He is a loving Father. The whole spiritual life is molded by our conceptions of God, and if we cherish erroneous views of His character, our souls will sustain injury. . . . {TMK 263.4}

Never are we absent from the mind of God. God is our joy and our salvation. {3SM 338.1}

The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour’s life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man’s redemption. {SC 21.2}

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. {ML 289.5}

God is to us a tender, compassionate, heavenly Father. {ML 289.6}

Human love may change, but Christ's love knows no change. {MH 72.3}

The love of God to man is incomprehensible, broad as the world, high as heaven, and as enduring as eternity. {HP 115.5}

In word and in deed the Messiah, during His earthly ministry, was to reveal to mankind the glory of God the Father. Every act of His life, every word spoken, every miracle wrought, was to make known to fallen humanity the infinite love of God. {PK 696.3}

Jesus did not seek to attract the people to Him by gratifying the desire for luxury. To that great throng, weary and hungry after the long, exciting day, the simple fare was an assurance not only of His power, but of His tender care for them in the common needs of life. {DA 367.2}

That prayer of Christ embraces all His followers to the close of time. Our Saviour foresaw the trials and dangers of His people; He is not unmindful of the dissensions and divisions that distract and weaken His church. He is looking upon us with deeper interest and more tender compassion than moves an earthly parent's heart toward a wayward, afflicted child. He bids us learn of Him. He invites our confidence. He bids us open our hearts to receive His love. He has pledged Himself to be our helper. {5T 237.2}

Not a sigh is breathed, not a pain felt, not a grief pierces the soul, but the throb vibrates to the Father's heart. {AG 189.5}

God is ever seeking to instruct finite men that they may exercise faith in Him and trust themselves wholly in His hands. Every drop of rain or flake of snow, every spire of grass, every leaf and flower and shrub, testifies of God. These little things so common around us, teach the lesson that nothing is beneath the notice of the infinite God, nothing too small for His attention (GCB Feb. 18, 1897). {3BC 1141.3}

God's everlasting arm encircles the soul that turns to Him for aid, however feeble that soul may be. {4T 328.1}

We all have many difficulties to meet, many perplexing problems to solve. But we have an all-powerful Helper, who will listen to our requests as willingly and gladly as He listened to the requests of those who, when He was on this earth in person, came to Him for help. . . . {HP 124.2}

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}

Never is one repulsed who comes to Him with a contrite heart. Not one sincere prayer is lost. Amid the anthems of the celestial choir, God hears the cries of the weakest human being. We pour out our heart's desire in our closets, we breathe a prayer as we walk by the way, and our words reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. They may be inaudible to any human ear, but they cannot die away into silence, nor can they be lost through the activities of business that are going on. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the confusion of the multitude, to the heavenly courts. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard. {COL 174.1}

Never feel that Christ is far away. He is always near. His loving presence surrounds you. {FLB 62.8}

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}

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}

Love was the element in which Christ moved and walked and worked. He came to embrace the world in the arms of His love. . . . {SD 147.2}

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}

Holiness is wholeness to God. The soul is surrendered to God. The will, and even the thoughts, are brought into subjection to the will of Christ. The love of Jesus fills the soul, and is constantly going out in a clear, refreshing stream, to make glad the hearts of others (MS 33, 1911). {6BC 1076.2}

The most powerful evidence a man can give that he has been born again and is a new man in Christ Jesus, is the manifestation of love for his brethren, the doing of Christlike deeds. This is the most wonderful witness that can be borne in favor of Christianity, and will win souls to the truth. . . . {SD 293.4}

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}

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}

Love imparts to its possessor grace, propriety, and comeliness of deportment. Love illuminates the countenance and subdues the voice; it refines and elevates the entire man. It brings him into harmony with God, for it is a heavenly attribute. {4T 559.3}