

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2026: *1 and 2 Corinthians*

Lesson 13 “Grace, Love, and Fellowship”

Read for this week’s study

2 Corinthians 8:9; Romans 16:20; 1 John 4:8–11; 2 Corinthians 13:11-14; Philippians 2:1, 2; Galatians 4:4–6.

Memory Text

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Corinthians 13:14, ESV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Grace of Jesus
- III. The Love of God
- IV. The God of Love
- V. The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit
- VI. Our Triune God
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “Paul closes 2 Corinthians by reemphasizing essential elements addressed in his letters. He does this through five imperatives (2 Cor. 13:11). [...] Grace, love, and fellowship result from the work of the triune God for us. These three Christian features promote an atmosphere characterized by God’s presence.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. The final sentence of 2 Corinthians is one of the most famous sayings of Paul – so much so that most people do not even realize it is by Paul. It sums up what being a Christian is all about: it draws the focus on the God we know in Jesus and through Jesus and the Spirit. So let’s dig a little deeper so that the familiar words do not wash over us, and we forget what they mean.
3. Why is it significant that Paul starts his epistle with “grace” and ends it with “grace”? (Sunday’s lesson) As we have seen in chapter 8:9, Paul uses the word “grace” to describe not only what God freely and lovingly did *for* us, but also what he does *in* us and *through* us; specifically to describe what God did in and through the churches in Macedonia when he stirred them to give generously. Why is this important?
4. Why does Paul speak of the grace of *Jesus*, rather than simply of God? How can this grace be powerfully active in the life of the church?

5. Secondly, Paul speaks of the “love of God” (Monday’s lesson). It is easy for us to take this for granted and to forget how the belief in a God of love was radical from the views of God in the ancient or medieval world (and other religions). That world was full of anxiety that came from fear of supernatural forces that were capricious, malevolent and needing to be pacified or placated.
6. Based on how we experience life, most people find it difficult to believe that God is a loving God. Why does Christianity insist that God, who made this world and is acting within the world, is a loving God?
7. How did experiencing this inspire the early Christians to embrace a new kind of spirituality and trust in a family which the world had never seen before? (Tuesday’s lesson)
8. Because this family connection is not based on physical or ethnic descent or relation, anyone and everyone is welcome in this community. How is this just as challenging to most modern people as it was to most ancient people? What is this “koinonia” of the Holy Spirit”? (Wednesday’s lesson)
9. Why are the order and nouns associated with each person of the Godhead significant here? (13:14; Thursday’s lesson) If Jesus is a created being (as some believe), can he be put before God? However, if they are of the same nature, then the order does not matter, and each person can supply each of the attributes! What is the practical significance of the belief in what was later in Christianity called the “Trinity”? Does it matter what we believe about God?
10. If you look at the cosmic conflict framework, what is the most significant contribution that 1 & 2 Corinthians makes? What do we learn about God, sin and the resolution of the cosmic conflict from them? How would we be poorer if we did not have these two letters? Share some thoughts to summarize how this quarter blessed you and how you can become a blessing to others.
11. Without 1 & 2 Corinthians we would have less clarity that the cross is God’s victory over the evil powers by the revelation of God’s character, not merely a mechanism of pardoning our sins.
12. The Corinthian letters are one of the strongest witnesses that the church is God’s *new temple* (1 Cor 3; 6). That means the conflict is not simply “my private piety versus temptation,” but God building a new community as his dwelling place in contested space.
13. Without 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, we would interpret ministry as success-metrics rather than faithful witness that sometimes looks like loss—until the resurrection tells the truth.
14. Without 1 & 2 Corinthians we would likely default either to *triumphalism* (“God’s people should look impressive”) or *despair* (“our weakness means God must not be working”), instead of Paul’s stubborn insistence: **God’s power shows up most clearly when the church lives the life of Jesus in fragile bodies and messy communities.**
15. Corinthians teaches that the cosmic conflict is won by the crucified-and-risen Christ, and its victory is displayed when Spirit-formed communities practice holiness, love, reconciliation, and experience resurrection hope in the most ordinary battlegrounds of human life.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

When did God begin to show how gracious He was? Well, to His family as a whole, even before this earth was created. In fact, did God begin to be gracious when sin came into the family? He'd never been gracious before? He's always been gracious. The thing is, there has always been grace. There's no such thing as grace without a person being gracious. God has always been gracious and always will be gracious. But His graciousness appears more vividly when He's dealing with some very ungracious people; and so the more we've sinned, the more His graciousness has abounded. You remember Paul spoke of that in Romans. But it isn't as if God had to invent grace because sin has come into the universe. Of course, we define grace sometimes as "unmerited favor," and so we only needed unmerited favor when we were bad. That's a limited understanding of this word "grace."

At mealtimes, when you're asked to offer grace, do you say, "God, you don't merit this, but thank you for this food?" You see, grace doesn't mean unmerited favor all the time, does it? When Paul says, "Who will deliver me from this doomed body? Thanks be to God, ..." it's "grace to God". He doesn't say, "God, you don't deserve this, but thank you for helping me." No, the word means basically, graciousness, and God has always been gracious. The universe has always been under grace, and always will be. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, recorded May 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/71MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/72MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

There is a text in here that may be missing in your version; the text that many have used through the years to support the idea of a trinity. First John 5:7. What do you have in your version for this? Now, I don't have it in mine, so from memory, "There be three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; these three are one." Now, those of you who have the *King James* have that verse. If you don't have the *King James*, you probably don't have that verse. You may have, "There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree." That's true. But the trinity text, "The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost; these three are one," you will not find in modern versions. Now, one would be very superficial and hasty if one said, "Well, obviously this version doesn't believe in the trinity." On the contrary, the best verses on the trinity are not this one anyway. But many of you know the history of that verse, how it got in, and how it got out. Does anybody have a Catholic translation here tonight? Oh, yes!

COMMENT: The footnote in the *Douay-Confraternity Catholic Version* reads: According to the evidence of many manuscripts, and the majority of commentators, these verses should read: "For there are three that bear witness: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three are one." The Holy See reserves to itself the right to pass finally on the origin of the present reading.

You see, the *King James Version*, that contains that famous trinity key text, comes from the Greek text of Erasmus. Erasmus, in 1516, printed the Greek New Testament for the first time. And when he

printed it, there was no trinity text. And a Cardinal down in Spain, Cardinal Jimenez, chided Erasmus and said, “You’ve left out the trinity text.” And Erasmus said, “Well, I don’t find it in the manuscripts that I have.” And the Cardinal suggested that maybe he could find manuscripts to support this. Meanwhile, Erasmus came out with his second edition, in 1519, and no Greek manuscripts, no trinity text. In 1522, Erasmus came out with his third printed edition, and lo, the trinity text is there! Apparently the Cardinal had found the manuscript. And the *King James Version* comes from that third edition. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – 1, 2, 3 John and Jude, recorded August 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/77MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/78MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

If you wanted to prove the trinity, how would you set out to do it? Would you look up first the trinity in the Concordance? Is the word ‘trinity’ ever in the Bible? No, it’s not in there, anyway. But supposing you wanted to show there are three co-equal, co-divine persons who are as one. Where would you best start? How about allowing one member of the Godhead to discuss the relationship between Himself, and the Father, and the Holy Spirit? “I and the Father are one. And when I go I’ll send another Counselor just like Myself to be with you.” And then you look in Hebrews to see the status of the one we call the Son. And God says to the angels, “worship the Son.” And then maybe you go back to Isaiah 9: “Unto us a child is born, to us a son is given; and his name will be called ‘Almighty God, Everlasting Father, Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace.’”

And you realize how all the members of the Godhead seem to have the same name, really. They are co-equal and co-eternal. I think it would be better not to use this verse in John, but the Gospel of John, where at length Jesus talks about His Father, and the Holy Spirit, and how they are as one. And so on, to take our true position on the trinity. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – 1, 2, 3 John and Jude, recorded August 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/77MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/78MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Just to show the unity of the three members of the Godhead there’s an extraordinary place in Isaiah 9 that we sing every Christmas when we sing the Messiah and the significance of that can’t be over-emphasized. Think how many times you’ve sung this. Isaiah 9:6. Now this is not the baby in Isaiah 7, you know, there was a baby born there and before he was old enough to say, “My father” and “my mother” the two kings who were besieging Jerusalem were driven off. Then Isaiah goes on to a much more important baby in Isaiah 9 and says:

To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder: and his name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor [now to whom do we usually give the name ‘Counsellor’ or comforter? Isn’t that usually the Holy Spirit? But this child is called Wonderful, Counsellor. How about], Mighty God [who comes first to mind with Mighty God? Don’t you

think of the Father? And then how about the next], Everlasting Father [you mean the Son will be called Everlasting Father? And the next], Prince of Peace [now there's one that seems to belong].

We have all the titles of the trinity here attributed to the Son. The Son will be the Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace—all of them. No wonder Jesus said in John 14, 15, and 16, "I and the Father are one. If you've seen me you've seen the Father. The Father's in union with me and I'm in union with the Father. And if I go I'll send you another counselor," just like myself the Greek says. It's a word that means 'the same as I am'. "And he too will lead you into truth just as I told you I am the truth, the way, the truth, and the life. And He will convince you of sin and righteousness and judgment, be your teacher and your comforter."

See, all three members of the Godhead have the same purposes and the same goals, but they seem to have assumed different roles for the benefit of their children throughout the universe. As Christ moved among the angels as Michael the Archangel, so he moved among us as Jesus the man born in Nazareth. Often misunderstood, these condescension's on God's part but if you wonder if the Son was really God read Isaiah 9:6. Could it be stronger? That all those titles of divinity and deity belong to the Son. I think it's a great key text in there to put with Hebrews 1. Think of the potent verses in Hebrews 1 that the one who came was God. Then put Isaiah 9:6 with it along with others. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Hebrews, #5&6, recorded October 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/9MMHEBREWS66> (Hebrews 5) <http://pkp.cc/10MMHEBREWS66> (Hebrews 6)

Further Study with Ellen White

Christ came to this earth in human form that He might stand as the Captain of our salvation, so that we should not be overcome by Satan's power. And when the enemy has seemed to be gaining a signal victory over righteousness, God has been working in mercy and power to counteract his designs. . . . {CTr 369.5}

Taking humanity upon Him, Christ came to be one with humanity, and at the same time to reveal our heavenly Father to sinful human beings. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone able to reveal the character of the Deity to mankind. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of men; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man. {MH 422.2}

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}

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}

But thirty years was all that the world could endure of its Redeemer. For thirty years He dwelt in a world all seared and marred with sin, doing the work that no other one ever had done or ever could do (ST Feb. 15, 1899). {5BC 1131.2}

In every human being He discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace—in “the beauty of the Lord our God” (Psalm 90:17). {AG 223.3}

God’s grace is ever working upon the human heart, and when it is received, the evidence of its reception will appear in the life and character of its recipient, for spiritual life will be seen developing from within. The grace of Christ in the heart will always promote spiritual life, and spiritual advancement will be made. {TMK 163.2}

The deep necessity of man for a divine teacher was known in heaven. The pity and sympathy of God were exercised in behalf of man, fallen and bound to Satan’s chariot-car; and when the fullness of time was come, He sent forth His Son. The One appointed in the counsels of heaven came to the earth as an instructor. He was no less a being than the Creator of the world, the Son of the Infinite God. The rich benevolence of God gave Him to our world; and to meet the necessities of humanity, He took on Him human nature. To the astonishment of the heavenly host, He walked this earth as the Eternal Word. Fully prepared, He left the royal courts to come to a world marred and polluted with sin. Mysteriously He allied Himself to human nature. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” God’s excess of goodness, benevolence, and love was a surprise to the world, of grace which could be realized, but not told. {FE 399.4}

In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. . . . “Unto *us* a child is born, unto *us* a son is given: . . .” (Isaiah 9:6). God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the “Son of man” who shares the throne of the universe. . . . In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love. {AG 79.5}

The rainbow of promise encircling the throne on high is an everlasting testimony that “God 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. It testifies to the universe that God will never forsake His children in the struggle with evil. It is an assurance to us of strength and protection as long as the throne itself shall endure. {MH 94.4}

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

When He ascended on high, and led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, He left the battle in our hands, but we are not to fight in our own strength; we should certainly fail if we attempted it. Christ is there present with the Father to bring to our help the unseen intelligences. . . . {HP 270.4}

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 Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. {CH 222.2}

While the sinner is yet far from the Father's house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father's heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God is but the tender pleading of His Spirit, wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father's heart of love. {SC 54.1}

Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us and bring us into communion with Him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of His hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with Him who made them all. {SC 85.1}

Through creation and redemption, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character are revealed. By the marvelous display of His love in giving "His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the character of God is revealed to the intelligences of the universe. Through Christ our heavenly Father is made known as the God of love. {ST, December 15, 1914 par. 5}

Could your eyes be opened, you would see your heavenly Father bending over you in love and could you hear His voice, it would be in tones of compassion to you who are prostrate with suffering and affliction. Stand fast in His strength; there is rest for you, the weary.—Letter 71, Dec. 5, 1878, to J. N. Andrews. {TDG 348.4}

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}

His heart was constantly burning with the love that brought Him from heaven to our world. His goodness and His power enabled Him to reveal in His life the truth that He came to this earth to bring to the fallen race. In every word, in every act, He manifested the love of God, cheering and encouraging the downcast and distressed. In heavenly wisdom He asserted His true majesty by bending all things to the present and future happiness of human beings. He came to teach men and women how to live, here below, the life of which He gave them an example—the life that will make them fit to enter the abodes of bliss. {UL 229.3}

The Holy Spirit was sent as the most priceless treasure man could receive. {ML 36.5}

The prince of the power of evil can only be held in check by the power of God in the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.—*Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 10, p. 37. (1897) {Ev 617.2}

We need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds.—*Manuscript 66*, 1899. (From a talk to the students at the Avondale School.) {Ev 616.5}

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}

The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty, it is left with us to decide our course. {FE 124.1}

Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which, through the grace of Christ, the soul becomes a conquering power. {MH 62.2}

When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to *choose* another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we “are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18. {SC 72.1}

The truth as it is in Jesus can be experienced, but never explained. Its height and breadth and depth pass our knowledge. We may task our imagination to the utmost, and then we shall see only dimly the outlines of a love that is unexplainable, that is as high as heaven, but that stooped to the earth to stamp the image of God on all mankind. {COL 129.1}