

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2023: *Managing for the Master—Till He Comes*
Lesson 10 “Giving Back”

Read for this week’s study

Luke 12:16–21; Ecclesiastes 2:18–22; Proverbs 27:23–27; 2 Corinthians 4:18; Ecclesiastes 5:10; Colossians 1:15–17.

Memory Text

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Revelation 14:13).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Rich Fool
- III. You Can’t Take It With You
- IV. Begin With Personal Needs
- V. Deathbed Charity
- VI. Spiritual Legacy
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week we will review God’s counsel regarding our last years. What are things that we should do, what should we avoid doing, and what principles should we follow?” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. The most common fears about the future are: dying too soon (before the family is taken care of); living too long (outliving our assets or savings); catastrophic illness (all my resources could go at one time); and mental and/or physical disability (who will take care of me?) What help does the Bible offer to deal with this anxiety?
3. Sunday’s lesson looks at Jesus’ parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21). What strong rebuke did the Lord give to the foolish man? What message does the story have for us today, about our attitude towards what we own?
4. Jesus is not just giving good advice on how to live a happy, carefree life. The man in the story wanted the security of enough possessions to last him a long time. Jesus

- calls him a 'fool' (cf. Matthew 5:22), as his values and attitudes are contrary to those of God's kingdom. How does understanding that God is a loving Father who provides for his children change that (12:22-32)?
5. What does it mean to have a "treasure in heaven" (v. 33-34)? Why does the meaning center around the reality that the values and priorities of God's kingdom transform the greed and anxiety of the world? How is this different from an assumption that the treasure is something that one will possess after one's death? What does it mean to be "rich toward God" (v. 21)?
 6. What is Jesus' contribution to the Biblical storyline regarding money and possessions? How does he move from the *extortion* economy (cf. Exodus 1:11 & Luke 12:18-19) that assumes *scarcity* to an *empowering* economy based on *abundance* of God, the Creator & Father? How does our giving contribute to the restoration of communal responsibility?
 7. The rest of the lesson focuses on the fact that you can't take anything with you (Monday's lesson), making and periodically updating the balance sheet (Tuesday's lesson), deathbed charity (Wednesday) and leaving a legacy (Thursday). This can be helpful, or it can be easily abused by unscrupulous people for nefarious purposes. What steps can we take to avoid being gullible, to discern trickery, while exploring legitimate ways we can use our money for both our family and the cause of God?
 8. You are not what you own, Jesus warns us. If a person is seduced to want more, even at somebody else's expense (his own brother in the parable), one's energy will be used for selfish accumulation for us and considering neighbors as disposable. Jesus points out that the accumulation of more wealth cannot be the measure of our life.
 9. Withdrawing from the world where fear of scarcity and anxiety about the future rule is possible by living in the world where "our Father", the creator of abundance governs. Birds and flowers (v. 24-31), practitioners of abundance, are contrasted to Solomon, who was a practitioner of scarcity, accumulation and greed. Our "striving" is not for money and possessions but for the "kingdom" that defies commoditization of creation (v. 31). Commodity is presided over by fear. Creation is presided over by the God who generously guarantees abundance.
 10. This can free us from the world of fear that we do not yet have enough, that we have not yet done enough and that we are not yet enough. The man in the parable was a fool. He never gave, he only took. If we live in our Father's world, we will become a source of blessings to others.

Further Study with Ellen White

When God gave His Son to our world, He endowed human beings with imperishable riches—riches compared with which the treasured wealth of men since the world began is nothingness. Christ came to the earth and stood before the children of men with the hoarded love of eternity, and this is the treasure that, through our connection with Him, we are to receive, to reveal, and to impart. {MH 37.1}

God has given us these precious things as an expression of His love. The Lord is a lover of the beautiful, and to please and gratify us He has spread before us the beauties of nature, even as an earthly parent seeks to place beautiful things before the children that He loves. The Lord is always pleased to see us happy. Sinful as it is with all its imperfections, the Lord has lavished upon this earth the useful and the beautiful. The beautiful, tinted flowers tell of His tenderness and love. They have a language of their own, reminding us of the Giver. {UL 327.3}

Whatever the position in which God has placed us, whatever our responsibilities or our dangers, we should remember that He has pledged Himself to impart needed grace to the earnest seeker. Those who feel insufficient for their position, and yet accept it because God bids them, relying upon His power and wisdom, will go on from strength to strength. When they enter upon their work, they may have almost everything to learn; but with Christ as a teacher they will become efficient laborers. God does not intrust His work to the worldly wise; for they are too proud to learn. He chooses those who, feeling their deficiencies, seek to be guided by unerring wisdom (ST Sept. 7, 1882). {2BC 1017.2}

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. {GC 493.2}

The God of heaven is constantly at work. It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms. It is not as the result of a mechanism, that, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is the continual evidence of the power of an ever-present God. {6BC 1062.5}