

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Fourth Quarter 2023: *God's Mission—My Mission*

### Lesson 8 "Mission to the Needy"

#### Read for this week's study

Luke 5:17–26; John 5:1–9; Deuteronomy 10:19; Leviticus 23:22; Matthew 25:34–40; John 15:13.

#### Memory Text

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me'" (Matthew 25:40, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. The Faith of Friends
- III. Christ's Method Alone
- IV. Refugees and Immigrants
- V. To Help the Hurting
- VI. Greater Love
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. "This week's lesson shows that God has a plan to reach those who might be needy in any number of ways. Their needs might be physical, emotional, financial, or even social: that is, some might be deemed as outcasts from their community or family. Whatever the needs are, we must be ready to do what we can to help. This is a central part of what it means to be a Christian and what mission must include." (Sabbath afternoon)
2. "Jesus' desire is for us to bring our helpless friends to Him." (Sunday's lesson) What are we implying when we say that "we need to lead people to Jesus"? What is it that God does and what are we supposed to do? What is significant about the verse, "When Jesus saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.'" (Luke 5:20)
3. Why must any meaningful help begin with recognizing people's needs? Why does effective "evangelism" start with listening? What strategy have you found most helpful to "listen" to peoples' needs? What is the difference between perceived needs and real needs?

4. What can we learn from Christ's method of mission (John 5:1-9; Mark 1:23-28; MH 143)? (Monday's lesson) Why are these five steps important?
5. "We generally can't do the kind of miracles that Jesus did." (Monday's lesson) How do you understand this sentence? Is it "Sadly, we generally can't do the kind of miracles that Jesus did"? If we could miraculously solve all people's problems, would that be a permanent solution? Why do you think Jesus increasingly refused to perform miracles as his ministry progressed? Couldn't he miraculously save himself from the final scenes of his life?
6. How can we minister to immigrants and refugees (Deuteronomy 10:19, Psalm 146:9, Romans 12:13, Leviticus 23:22)? (Tuesday's lesson) How can the Adventist family of 22 million help the 71 million people who have been forcibly displaced worldwide?
7. Jesus considered helping hurting people as His life mission (Luke 4:18). What does this teach us about what we, too, in our own sphere, could be doing for those in need around us? What can we learn from Jesus' parable of the last judgment (Matthew 25:34-40)? (Wednesday's lesson).
8. "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). How do we apply this principle in our ministry to others? (Thursday's lesson)
9. Jesus' treatment of people came from his conviction that they have immense value because we all are created in God's image. List some ways which help us learn to see people through that prism.
10. The problems of this world are too complex for simple solutions. But the fact that we cannot solve them does not mean we should do nothing. What can we do individually and as a group of believers in our sphere of influence?
11. As part of Jesus' church, how can we safeguard, protect, and maintain the value of every human being regardless of gender, class, sexual orientation, ethnic group, or religion?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Then you remember the experience with the paralytic at the pool. For thirty-eight years he had been trying to get into the water. One Sabbath afternoon he looked up, and the kindest face he had ever seen looked back at him and said, "Would you like to be well?" Jesus didn't lecture the man on the youthful self-indulgence that may have caused his illness in the first place. He simply said, "Would you like to be well? If so, get up, put your mat under your arm and go home." Later, Jesus met him and said, "I suggest you stop sinning, lest something worse befall you." But always in that order—first Jesus made people comfortable. He healed them. Especially sinners who might be despising themselves, He tried to recover their dignity and self-respect. How can you ask a person to act with dignity when you have deprived him of his self-respect? God always first restores this. Later He said to stop sinning, lest something worse

befall you. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #13, “How God Treats His Erring Children” 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/13MMCAG>

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

Angelic agencies, though invisible, are cooperating with visible human agencies, forming a relief association with men. Is there not something stimulating and inspiring in this thought that the human agent stands as the visible instrument to confer the blessings of angelic agencies? As we are thus laborers together with God, the work bears the inscription of the divine. With what joy and delight all heaven looks upon these blended influences, influences which are acknowledged in the heavenly courts! Human agencies are the hands of heavenly instrumentalities, for heavenly angels employ human hands in practical ministry. Their acts of unselfish ministry make them partakers in the success which is a result of the relief offered. This is Heaven’s way of administering saving power. The knowledge and actions of the heavenly order of workers, united with the knowledge and power which are imparted to human agencies, relieve the oppressed and distressed. {ML 305.2}

Human agencies are called to be hand helpers, to work out the knowledge and use the facilities of heavenly angels. By uniting with these powers that are omnipotent, we shall be benefited by their higher education and experience. . . . Such a cooperation will accomplish a work which will give honor and glory and majesty to God. {ML 305.4}

When He sent forth the seventy He commanded them to heal the sick, and next to preach that the kingdom of God had come nigh unto them. Their physical health was to be first cared for, in order that the way might be prepared for their minds to be reached by those truths which the apostles were to preach. {4T 225.1}

The divine commission needs no reform. Christ’s way of presenting truth cannot be improved upon. The Saviour gave the disciples practical lessons, teaching them how to work in such a way as to make souls glad in the truth. He sympathized with the weary, the heavy-laden, the oppressed. He fed the hungry and healed the sick. Constantly He went about doing good. By the good He accomplished, by His loving words and kindly deeds, He interpreted the gospel to men. {CH 498.2}

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man’s necessity. He “took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses,” that He might minister to every need of humanity. Matthew 8:17. The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His

mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character. {MH 17.1}

Varied were the circumstances and needs of those who besought His aid, and none who came to Him went away unhelped. From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole. {MH 17.2}

In every human being, however fallen, He beheld a son of God, one who might be restored to the privilege of His divine relationship.—*Education*, p. 79. (1903) {Ev 55.3}

Christ stood at the head of humanity in the garb of humanity. So full of sympathy and love was His attitude that the poorest was not afraid to come to Him. He was kind to all, easily approached by the most lowly. He went from house to house, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the distressed. . . . He was willing to humble Himself, to deny Himself. He did not seek to distinguish Himself. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to be a comfort and a consolation to others, to gladden the sad and heavy-laden one with whom He daily came in contact. {WM 53.2}

The life of Christ was filled with words and acts of benevolence, sympathy, and love. He was ever attentive to listen to and relieve the woes of those who came to Him. {EW 160.1}

Never feel that Christ is far away. He is always near. His loving presence surrounds you. Seek Him as One who desires to be found of you. He desires you not only to touch His garments, but to walk with Him in constant communion. {MH 85.2}

He spoke of God, not as an avenging judge, but as a tender father, and He revealed the image of God as mirrored in Himself. His words were like balm to the wounded spirit. Both by His words and by His works of mercy He was breaking the oppressive power of the old traditions and man-made commandments, and presenting the love of God in its exhaustless fullness. {DA 204.4}

Jesus commenced his work by breaking the power which Satan held over the suffering. He healed those who had suffered by his evil power. He restored the sick to health, healed the lame, and caused them to leap in the gladness of their hearts, and glorify God. He gave sight to the blind, and restored to health by his power those who had been infirm and bound by Satan's cruel power many years. The weak, the trembling, and the desponding, he comforted with gracious words. He raised the dead to life, and they glorified God for the mighty display of his power. He wrought mightily for all who believed on him. And the feeble, suffering ones whom Satan held in triumph, Jesus wrenched from his grasp, and brought to them by his divine power, soundness of body, and great joy and happiness. {1Red 61.3}

The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and physical restoration. Deliverance from sin and the healing of disease were linked together. {CT 465.2}

The Saviour made each work of healing an occasion for implanting divine principles in the mind and soul. This was the purpose of His work. He imparted earthly blessings, that He might incline the hearts of men to receive the gospel of His grace. {MH 20.1}

Sickness, suffering, and death are work of an antagonistic power. Satan is the destroyer; God is the restorer. {MH 113.1}

But not to any class is Christ's love restricted. He identifies Himself with every child of humanity. That we might become members of the heavenly family, He became a member of the earthly family. He is the Son of man, and thus a brother to every son and daughter of Adam. His followers are not to feel themselves detached from the perishing world around them. They are a part of the great web of humanity; and Heaven looks upon them as brothers to sinners as well as to saints. The fallen, the erring, and the sinful, Christ's love embraces; and every deed of kindness done to uplift a fallen soul, every act of mercy, is accepted as done to Him. {DA 638.4}

God created the earth to be the abode of holy, happy beings. That purpose will be fulfilled when, renewed by the power of God and freed from sin and sorrow, it shall become the eternal home of the redeemed. {AH 540.3}

The deeds of kindness may have been done in secret, but the result upon the character of the doer cannot be hidden. If we work with wholehearted interest as a follower of Christ, the heart will be in close sympathy with God, and the Spirit of God, moving upon our spirit, will call forth the sacred harmonies of the soul in answer to the divine touch. {MB 83.1}

God's law is the law of love. He has surrounded you with beauty to teach you that you are not placed on earth merely to delve for self, to dig and build, to toil and spin, but to make life bright and joyous and beautiful with the love of Christ—like the flowers, to gladden other lives by the ministry of love. {MB 97.3}

This love must be manifested by God's workers. Love for God and for those for whom Christ has died will do a work that we can scarcely comprehend. {6T 84.3}

Kind words are never lost. Jesus records them as if spoken to Himself. Sow the seeds of kindness, of love, and of tenderness, and they will blossom and bear fruit (MS 33, 1911). {6BC 1118.2}

The life of Christ was a life charged with a divine message of the love of God, and He longed intensely to impart this love to others in rich measure. Compassion beamed from His countenance, and His conduct was characterized by grace and humility, love and truth. {OHC 366.4}

What a wonderful reverence for human life Jesus expressed in His life mission! He stood not among the people as a king, demanding attention, reverence, service, but as one who wished to

serve, to uplift humanity. He said He had not come to be ministered unto but to minister. . . .  
{OHC 176.3}

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 kindness 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}

It should be our aim to bring all the pleasantness possible into our lives, and to do all the kindness possible to those around us. Kind words are never lost. Jesus records them as if spoken to Himself. Sow the seeds of kindness, of love, and of tenderness, and they will blossom and bear fruit. {OHC 293.5}

True courtesy blended with truth and justice makes the life not only useful but beautiful and fragrant. Kind words, pleasant looks, a cheerful countenance, throw a charm about the Christian that makes his influence almost irresistible. In forgetfulness of self, in the light and peace and happiness that he is constantly bestowing on others, he finds true joy. {HP 180.5}