

# Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

## Third Quarter 2024: *The Book of Mark*

### Lesson 8 “Teaching Disciples: Part II”

#### Read for this week’s study

Mark 10; Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:24; Galatians 4:1, 2; Romans 6:1–11; Isaiah 11:1–16.

#### Memory Text

“ ‘For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many’ ” (Mark 10:45, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. God’s Plan for Marriage
- III. Jesus and Children
- IV. The Best Investment
- V. Can You Drink My Cup?
- VI. ‘What Do You Want Me to Do for You?’
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This chapter of Mark carries important teachings about what it means to follow Jesus, particularly as it relates to living in the here and now: marriage, children, how to relate to riches, and the reward and cost of following Him. Topping it off is the healing of a second blind man (Mark 10:46–52, compare with Mark 8:22–26), which provides the closing bookend for the section (Mark 8:22–10:52) and a beautiful illustration of what following Jesus both costs and leads to.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. When the pharisees asked Jesus about divorce, why does Mark say they posed the question as a trap (10:1-12)? (Sunday’s lesson) Where is this incident taking place (10:1)? Why does Jesus only give the detailed answer when he is back safely in the house with the disciples (cf. 4:10; 7:17)? Why did John the Baptist get put in prison and finally lose his head? How do we know that the present passage is not designed to give detailed case law for divorce (cf. Matthew 5:32; 1 Corinthians 7)?

3. Jesus does not say that Moses was wrong with the ‘permission’ in Deuteronomy, but he insists that one should go back to Genesis, to the account of creation itself, to discover the Creator’s will. Why is mentioning “hardness of heart” significant here (10:5, cf. 8:17)? The problem was not with the ideal, nor with the law, but with the people. Israel, instead of being the prototype of renewed humanity, was just like everybody else.
4. What cure for “hardness of heart” does Jesus offer (10:13-16)? What did Jesus do for those who brought children to him? (Monday’s lesson) How do we model compassion and sensitivity so that those who are truly weak and vulnerable are not hurt?
5. What is the connection between the story of ‘the rich man’ and children (10:17-31) (Tuesday’s lesson) Jesus invites a man with money to join him in serving the poor, who are also portrayed in Mark as “little ones”. In the ensuing discussion Jesus shows that with God’s assistance one can attain the radical reorientation of attitude and action required in God’s kingdom (10:24-27; cf. 1:15; 6:12).
6. This brings us to the third cycle of Jesus foretelling his suffering loss, ridicule and death (and subsequent resurrection). In a shame culture, ridicule should be avoided at all costs. But the Son of Man will experience loss of honor, there is no glory or greatness in what is ahead of him (10:32-45). (Wednesday’s lesson)
7. What is the disciples’ response? Where do we now see the example of the disciples seeking gain (10:35-45)? How is the repentance couched in Jesus’ response to them? Jesus’ radical other-regarding service liberates – ransoms – the oppressed and outcasts ushering them into God’s compassionate and inclusive kingdom.
8. This section concludes as it began, with a story of a blind man cured, highlighting one more time the disciples’ “blindness” (10:46-52). (Thursday’s lesson) What question did Jesus ask (10:36.51)? Blind beggars – another of society’s “little ones” – have had their concern for status and glory beaten out of them. Jesus makes the beggar whole and liberates him from his exile on the dusty roadside (10:46) and restores him to God’s kingdom community (10:52).
9. This entire section is framed by blind men seeing, which highlights by contrast the disciples’ lack of seeing properly. How can the disciples, who have eyes, not see, while the blind can see and follow? Their desire to be great prevents the disciples from seeing and following. In the end, they will deny and desert Jesus.
10. How can the disciples’ incomprehension assist our comprehension? Their action is not due to ignorance. They have seen Jesus and his power, they themselves have exercised that power, yet failed to understand. How can we avoid their fate? How can our hearts escape being captive to cares of this world? Is our desire for self-glorification, power, even sitting at the right hand of God himself, prohibiting us from seeing the kingdom way of servant love, compassion and self-sacrificial service? How can we follow Jesus in our time and place today? What does it mean to be Jesus’ true follower in our contemporary context?

## Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

And at a wedding those are very serious words. I always use them if I have the privilege of conducting a wedding. And whenever I speak those words, I don't know why, they are particularly moving. Jesus said this Himself! Whatever God has joined together, let not man put asunder. "So they said to him," all right "why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" Haven't we got you there? Is that not in the Bible? We have key texts for it! Moses did that. And if you'll go back and read, at the end of these laws, it says, "These are the laws that God gave Moses and Moses gave the people." So they thought they had Him there.

And Jesus said to them, "Yes, I'm not going to say that My Father and I, through Moses, did not give you permission to divorce your wives. But do you know why? For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery." And even the disciples were stunned by this! "And the disciples said to him, 'If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is not expedient to marry.'" That is, "If we have to commit ourselves to these women for the rest of our lives—you mean you never can get out of this? It would be best not to marry. I mean, that's too great a commitment!" They couldn't understand. He says, "Well, maybe you can't take it." He said to them, "Not all men can receive this precept, but only those to whom it is given."

But look at the lesson in there! He says, "Not only the divorce laws, but a lot of other things that I gave you in the Old Testament, are not evidence of approval. It's just as far as I was able to lead you at the time. And because of the stiffness of your necks, and the hardness of your hearts, I permitted you to divorce." Remember Malachi? "I hate divorce." Remember in Malachi? "I don't like it." And even if it's for a legal reason, it's always a very difficult situation. There is no nice, clean, easy way out of a marriage. There never is a clear way to handle it afterwards, because the whole thing is an emergency that was not supposed to happen. So the provision for divorce, on any grounds, was not supposed to happen. I mean infidelity was not supposed to happen.

So if we have difficulty with divorce laws, of course, they are an emergency measure. The ideal is that the situation would never prevail that would call for divorce, and the two would remain one forever. That's what God intended. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Intertestament Period & Matthew, recorded March 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/51MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/52MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Isn't it that in God we have all these qualities in one Person, and it takes two persons, a man and a woman, really, to have all of these. But if we live together long enough, some of them will rub off, and if a marriage has been good, it will result in two whole persons. Haven't you noticed people who have been married for a long time how much they seem to be alike? I'll never forget Doctor and Mrs. Caviness walking down the aisle at PUC; you would think they were brother and sister. I think of other couples that walk down the aisle. These things rub off on each other. A happy, prosperous marriage results in two whole people, not in the wife being lost in her husband. Besides, what is the image of God within us? The closest statement I can think of from Ellen White that represents the truth of Scripture, is that every human being, man and woman, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. If marriage means that one member of the partnership gives up his or her individuality, then that marriage has served to destroy the image of God in one or the other, and we wouldn't dare do that. So a good marriage would result in two individuals with power to think and to do.

Now turn back to Paul and other places in the Bible. At weddings, whose writings do we read most, but Paul's! He had lovely things to say about marriage. He also said that husbands should love their wives. And then, lest we misunderstand that, he wrote 1 Corinthians 13 which says "Love is never rude, and is never arrogant, it never boasts. It never even insists on having its own way." Then if a husband loves his wife in terms of 1 Corinthians 13, he never insists on having his own way.

Then he says we should love our wives as we love ourselves. And if we don't really love ourselves, he goes a little further and says we should love our wives as Christ has loved the church and gave His life for the church. So it seems pretty clear, doesn't it? Would you want to live with a God who would say such things about all of us? So, it's another illustration of taking the Bible as a whole, and not "here a little and there a little", and certainly not marginal comments, which might misrepresent Him rather seriously. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from audio series, "Picture Of God In All 66", *Exodus*, recorded October 1981, Riverside CA}

{Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Exodus, recorded October 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/3MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/4MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Lou: I am struck by a bit of incongruity, it would seem, in the Scripture. Where on the one hand, you are talking about us growing up—and then if you turn to the words of Jesus, over and over again He said we should be as little children. And, if we're not as little children, we can't enter the Kingdom of Heaven. What do you do with those references? For instance, in Luke and in Matthew where He talked about being as little children and seemed to set up a very high priority on that—and you're saying, "Why don't you grow up?"

Graham: When you are putting it especially in the setting of the audience around, and how they were misbehaving, and He takes a little child and says, "Unless you're at least like this, you'll not see the Kingdom." I don't think we should ever lose that: the trust of a little child—the curiosity, the willingness to listen, the willingness to learn. You remember the Laodiceans are not willing to listen to anything, though they're grown up, it would appear. I think that is never to be lost. But Ephesians also says that while we should never lose those precious qualities of childish interest and curiosity and willingness to listen, we should not remain as children, requiring much protection. We should become adults who can stand on their own. I think it's marvelous to see somebody in his seventies, eighties, nineties, who still has the curiosity, interest and trust of a little child.

Lou: We could think of some, couldn't we? So you say he's talking about certain qualities.

Graham: Oh, yes. {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>*

Now, in Ephesians, next time, Paul says, "Now, if all that matters is being reborn, and being restored to a right relationship, why don't we just stay that way?" No, he says little children need too much protection, in an evil world. And it will get worse as the end approaches. We need to grow up, and not be babies any longer. So Paul deplores the condition of those who have just a new heart and a right spirit, and the beginnings of trust and willingness to listen. He said, by now you ought to be teachers, you need milk, not solid food; milk is for those who are unskilled in the word of God.

If we still need lots of protection to be true to what we know to be true, then we're still babes, and we're not ready for the difficult times to come. And the Bible warns us of those before the end comes. The message I get from the remaining books in the Bible is that once we've been reborn, we ought to grow up, without delay, and become mature people who do what's right because it is right, as Job did, even though everything seems to the contrary. And if we do not grow up and have nothing more after fifty years than the faith of a little child, we are all retards. When a person is physically retarded, we get worried. When he's mentally retarded,

we become quite alarmed. When he's spiritually retarded, we say, "Isn't that sweet? The faith of a little child." No, that's the most dangerous respect in which to be retarded. And Ephesians really deals with this next time. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Galatians, recorded May 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/65MMPOGIA66>*

Now not to get too involved here, but Luke doesn't say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Luke says, "Blessed are the poor" and that doesn't make much sense because it isn't blessed to be poor, is it? But the reasoning is exactly the same. You see, to the Jew if you were rich they were grateful it was God's blessing. But God only blessed good people. Therefore, rich people were good people. So if a man was wealthy he knew he already had God's approval and Jesus couldn't bring him any help at all. He already had God's approval. And that's why He said it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the kingdom. And the disciples said, "That's very puzzling because if a rich person can't make it into the kingdom who can?" because you're rich because you're blessed and you're blessed because you're good.

This is the whole argument in the book of Job. The four friends said you must have sinned because now you're poor. And when the rich young ruler was told to sell all that he had and to give it to the poor we sometimes over-simplify that and say the man was greedy. No, that would have been a trivial temptation. The rich young ruler was asked to give up the clearest evidence that he was blessed of God and a virtuous Jew. He was asked to associate with sinners and that was too much for him. It wasn't just greed and selfishness. It was too much for him to give up the evidence of approval, God's approval as accepted by all the Jews and they believe it to this very day. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, We've Camped Around This Mountain Long Enough, #1, recorded July 1989, South Dakota Conference Ministers Meeting} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/1MMCAMPED>*

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

He [Christ] identified Himself with the lowly, the needy, and the afflicted. He took little children in His arms and descended to the level of the young. His large heart of love could comprehend their trials and necessities, and He enjoyed their happiness. His spirit, wearied with the bustle and confusion of the crowded city, tired of association with crafty and hypocritical men, found rest and peace in the society of innocent children. His presence never repulsed them. The Majesty of heaven condescended to answer their questions and simplified His important

lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their young, expanding minds the seeds of truth that would spring up and produce a plentiful harvest in their riper years. {AH 275.1}

Christ watched children at their play, and often expressed His approval when they gained an innocent victory over something they were determined to do. He sang to children in sweet and blessed words. They knew that He loved them. He never frowned on them. He shared childish joys and sorrows. Often he would gather flowers, and after pointing out their beauties to the children, would leave them with them as a gift. He had made the flowers, and He delighted to point out their beauties. {LHU 90.5}

The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906). {6BC 1074.2}

Sanctification means habitual communion with God (RH March 15, 1906). {7BC 908.16}

In Christ's kingdom there is no lordly oppression, no compulsion of manner. The angels of heaven do not come to the earth to rule, and to exact homage, but as messengers of mercy, to co-operate with men in uplifting humanity. {DA 550.6}

In His life and lessons Christ has given a perfect exemplification of the unselfish ministry which has its origin in God. God does not live for Himself. By creating the world, and by upholding all things, He is constantly ministering to others. "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5:45. This ideal of ministry the Father committed to His Son. Jesus was given to stand at the head of humanity, by His example to teach what it means to minister. His whole life was under a law of service. He served all, ministered to all. {AA 359.1}

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love, not only those who loved them, but those who hated

them, who treated them despitefully. In this he was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted his teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul. {RH, November 17, 1891 par. 7}

In the place where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounds. The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God. Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died,—here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, “and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.” And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift,—*Immanuel, “God with us.”* {DA 26.3}

Jesus presented the Father as one to whom we could give our confidence and present our wants. When we are in terror of God, and overwhelmed with the thought of His glory and majesty, the Father points us to Christ as His representative. What you see revealed in Jesus, of tenderness, compassion, and love, is the reflection of the attributes of the Father. The cross of Calvary reveals to man the love of God. Christ represents the Sovereign of the universe as a God of love. By the mouth of the prophet He said, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee” (Jeremiah 31:3). {HP 18.3}