

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Second Quarter 2026: *Growing in a Relationship With God*

Lesson 11 “Setbacks”

Read for this week’s study

Mark 4:35–41; Mark 5:21–34; Romans 5:3–5; Job 19:23–27; Job 23:8–12; Luke 24:13–27; Romans 8:18, 28.

Memory Text

“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Romans 5:3–5, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Life’s Storms
- III. Be Made Well
- IV. Job
- V. The Road to Emmaus
- VI. See Jesus
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week, we’ll explore some responses we often have when life is challenging. We’ll consider how we might use life’s setbacks to strengthen, not weaken, our most important relationship.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Because the universe is in a real conflict between God’s character of love and Satan’s character of coercion and destruction, earth is a frontline battleground. As a result, we humans are caught in the crossfire. None of us can escape setbacks, storms, and life difficulties on this side of the Garden of Eden. Thus, the ultimate question is not how do we escape them, but do they bring us closer to God?
3. What lessons about life’s storms can you take from the story in Mark 4:35–41? (Sunday’s lesson) What does the question of the disciples: “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” (v. 38) reveal about their operating system? How does Mark point his readers to a bigger reality in v. 36b? What is the connection between calming the storm and the parables in chapter 4?

4. Jonah got into a storm because of his *disobedience* (Jonah 1); the disciples got into a storm because of their *obedience* (Mark 4:35-41). How we respond to the storms in our lives shapes and reveals our character, all in real-time view of the “watching universe”. Setbacks are opportunities for growth and character development.
5. What can we learn from the intertwined story of Jairus’ daughter and the woman with chronic bleeding? (Mark 5:21-34; Monday’s lesson) How do you understand the words of Jesus, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease.” (5:34) Why do most Christians read it as, “Woman, your strong conviction has made you well”? Jesus could have said: “Woman, my miraculous power has made you well.” But he did not, because it would obscure an important truth about a healing relationship of trusting confidence. What transformation can vital love bring into one’s life?
6. When the woman touched Jesus, instantly two things happened: she was not only healed but also discovered. She fell to the ground, consumed with grief and remorse. What does it say to us about God that Jesus leaned toward her, lifted her in his arms, and called her his daughter? What does it say to us about God that Jesus noticed that the little girl was hungry (5:43)?
7. What is so significant about the story of Job (Tuesday’s lesson)? How did Job respond in Job 19:23–27 and 23:8–12? Life’s storms result not from God’s will but from the fallout of rebellion in the universe. God is not the author of tragedy. “An enemy has done this” becomes a meaningful theological category. The question is about God’s character, not Job’s behavior.
8. Why does Luke tell the story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus? “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?” (Luke 24:38, NKJV). What are we supposed to learn from the story besides the fact that, “too often, we forget that Jesus walks beside us in our valleys. Too often we don’t recognize Him. Too often we forget that there’s much more to the story.” (Wednesday’s lesson)?
9. What is the significance of the fact that three times Luke uses the verb “to open” (*dianoigo*) [eyes in v. 31; Scripture in v. 32; minds to understand the Scripture in vs. 44, 45] in this story? How can we “see” Jesus today?
10. Jesus wants to open our eyes and our minds so that we see the beautiful story of Scripture “that testifies of Him”. God does not “send storms to teach lessons”. But He can redeem suffering and transforming it for good without being its cause.
11. The cosmic conflict model gives hope that evil is temporary and not part of God’s eternal design. Storms happen because we live in a war zone. God is not the cause; He is the healer and restorer. Evil has an expiration date. One day God’s justice and healing will be universal and visible to all.
12. If we miss the big story, we miss everything. If we see the cathedral, we will see what God is trying to accomplish by restoring the Paradise lost into Paradise renewed.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: But you referred to Job. If I remember correctly, God called Job a perfect person. He referred to him as perfect. And yet as you come to the end of the book of Job, it says he repented.

Graham: In dust and ashes.

Lou: Yes. Now, what did he have to repent of? What does repentance mean when God has said, "Here is a perfect man?" He says that to Lucifer, to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? A good and perfect man."

Graham: That's right. In the hearing of the on-looking universe God said, "Here is a perfect man." And the perfect man says, "I repent." Well, I notice that we are more inclined to point out his repentance rather than God's word that he is perfect. We need to re-read the whole book here this evening. But my understanding is that under the pressure of the bad advice of his friends, Job finally came to the place where he said, "God, I'm sorry I have talked about things beyond my understanding." And God immediately intervened and said, "Don't give up, Job. You have done splendidly! You have said of Me what is right. Don't let these three theologians discourage you. In fact, pray for them. They need a lot of help to know Me the way you do" (Job 42:7, 8).

So we really need to take that book as a whole. God said he was perfect. Job in his humility said, "God, I have said a lot, and I've said it with a great deal of feeling. If I seem the least bit irreverent, I repent."

God said, "A man who is covered with boils and has lost his whole family; oh, I can understand why you cry the way you have. You did not insult Me by this. You honored Me with your confidence." Which, by the way, comes up next week when we have "Talking To God As A Friend." Job is a marvelous example of how freely we can talk to God, yet still be reverent. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #14 with Lou Venden, "God Can Completely Heal the Damage Done" recorded May 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/14MMCAG>

Lou: We must move on to some other very important questions in this same connection. This phrase, "Thy will be done." If we really want and mean for God's will to be done, why ask for anything? Wouldn't it be more trusting really to just say, "God, do what You're going to do"?

Graham: Ah, yes. So many things come to mind, but especially watching Jesus do it. He really was an example in almost every important area. He would say to His Father, "Thy will be done; nevertheless . . ." I think that if prayer is conversation with God, we will be honest with Him. I do not relish what's coming. I want to understand this, and I want You to do things Your way. I want to defer to Your wisdom. Nevertheless, may I talk to You about this? May I tell You honestly I

want this, I want that, I shrink from this, I shrink from that?” That’s real, honest conversation. But behind it all, we are going to defer to God’s wisdom; of course. I think it underscores the idea that it’s genuine, honest conversation.

Lou: But to turn that the other way, there are those who express real concern that when you are praying, for example, for someone who is very seriously ill, a loved one that you very much want to be healed, that it’s somehow an expression of a lack of faith, to, after you’ve said, “Lord, please heal my mother or my child,” then to say, “Nevertheless, Thy will be done.” Wouldn’t it be more trusting to just say, “Lord, heal. I believe You are going to”?

Graham: Because we want to tell Him what to do. It would seem to me, it shows much more trust to say, “God, You know best, and You do that for this person.”

Lou: You’re saying then that it’s perfectly all right to express my will very forcibly, I mean, to tell God exactly what I want?

Graham: Or I’m not telling the truth. I want this person to be well. This is my mother. Please make her well.

Lou: But then is that a lack of trust?

Graham: “Thy will be done” is much more trust.

Lou: Not a lack of faith.

Graham: No, and I love it when the person you are praying for says, “Look, you don’t have to dictate to God. He doesn’t have to heal me for me to trust Him. I’m willing for Him to do whatever is best, and you may pray that way.” And you know from experience, isn’t it easy to pray around the bedside when the patient, someone you love especially, trusts God like that. I’ve had many, many experiences like that. It is very moving. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #15 with Lou Venden, “Talking to God as a Friend” recorded May 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/15MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

Never are we absent from the mind of God. God is our joy and our salvation. {CTr 357.2}

We know that in sadness and grief we feel very frail, but we know that Jesus is right by our side to sympathize with us, and He will help us. We can commune with our best Friend; He is right by our side. We need not go into the heavens to bring Him down, for He is right by us to help us. {CTr 42.4}

The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called

to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

The Saviour ministered to both the soul and the body. The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and of physical restoration. Deliverance from sin and healing of disease were linked together. {ML 154.2}

Jesus never disappoints the one who comes to Him for help. He is saying to you today, "Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). He will give you rest in Him. No one who comes to Him goes away unhelped. Take your burdens to the divine Burden Bearer and leave them with Him, knowing that He will carry them for you. . . . {HP 275.2}

"Be not therefore anxious for the morrow." Matthew 6:34, R. V. We are to follow Christ day by day. God does not bestow help for tomorrow. He does not give His children all the directions for their life journey at once, lest they should become confused. He tells them just as much as they can remember and perform. The strength and wisdom imparted are for the present emergency. "If any of you lack wisdom,"—for today,—let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. {DA 313.4}

In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, have faith in God. He is working out His will, doing all things well in behalf of His people. The strength of those who love and serve Him will be renewed day by day. {MH 482.1}

He is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the help they need. He will give them the wisdom which their varied necessities demand. {MH 482.2}

Jesus did not first reveal Himself in His true character to them, and then open the Scriptures to their minds; for He knew that they would be so overjoyed to see Him again, risen from the dead, that their souls would be satisfied. They would not hunger for the sacred truths which He wished to impress indelibly upon their minds, that they might impart them to others, who should in their turn spread the precious knowledge, until thousands of people should receive the light given that day to the despairing disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus. {5BC 1125.11}

He maintained His disguise till He had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in His life, His character, His mission to earth, and His death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by His personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of His life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth. When the object of His labors with the two disciples was gained, He revealed Himself to them, that their joy might be full, and then vanished from their sight (ST Oct. 6, 1909). {5BC 1125.12}

The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the Word as a whole and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a

knowledge of its grand central theme—of God’s original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for the supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found. {LHU 115.2}

The truth will be continually unfolding, expanding, and developing, for it is divine, like its Author. {3SM 188.2}

The truths of redemption are capable of constant development and expansion. Though old, they are ever new, constantly revealing to the seeker for truth a greater glory and a mightier power. {COL 127.3}

In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. The old truths are all essential; new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it. It is only as the old truths are understood that we can comprehend the new. When Christ desired to open to His disciples the truth of His resurrection, He began “at Moses and all the prophets” and “expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:27. {COL 127.4}

Jesus consents to bear our burdens only when we trust Him. He is saying: “Come unto me, all ye weary and heavy laden; give Me your load; trust Me to do the work that it is impossible for the human agent to do.” Let us trust Him. Worry is blind and cannot discern the future. But Jesus sees the end from the beginning, and in every difficulty He has His way prepared to bring relief. Abiding in Christ, we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. {AG 113.6}

God has given us every facility, every grace. He has provided the riches of heaven’s treasure, and it is our privilege to draw continually from this capital. {AG 235.6}

In the experience of the apostle John under persecution, there is a lesson of wonderful strength and comfort for the Christian. God does not prevent the plottings of wicked men, but He causes their devices to work for good to those who in trial and conflict maintain their faith and loyalty. {AA 574.2}

God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. {FLB 64.3}

Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish and a plain path before their feet. {FLB 64.6}