



**METRO NEW YORK WORLD MINISTRY**  
ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL CONTRIBUTING NOTES  
For the week of Feb 20 – Feb 26, 2016  
Lesson #9: **Rebellion and Redemption**

# The Great Controversy and the Early Church

## Sabbath Afternoon

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Scripture: “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13

Peter spoke with boldness as if he was comfortable and well-prepared to speak. John demonstrated the same courage and steadfastness. They were considered unlearned because they had not been educated as scribes. They were not ignorant in the sense of lacking intelligence, but that they held no political, religious, or public office. It was as if they did not hold the proper credentials to speak publicly as religious teachers.

The Jewish leaders took knowledge that Peter and John had been with Jesus. They spoke like Jesus. They patterned themselves after Jesus. How did Jesus speak? Jesus spoke kindly yet earnestly. He used pure speech. Jesus spoke in parables and used lessons from nature. He always spoke with a “Thus saith a Lord.”

Application: For God’s people to be successful in this great controversy we must pattern ourselves after Christ in all things. We want the faith of Jesus, the mind of Christ, the love of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ.

## Sunday’s Lesson

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Title: The Beginning of a New Beginning

Scripture: Acts 1:4-11

Before His ascension, Jesus would instruct His disciples to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Here were His faithful followers who already had the Holy Spirit, but they were to receive more.

They still showed some confusion over the restoration of the kingdom, but Jesus would correct their thinking a little later. What they truly needed now was that upper room experience of settling all their differences. Then they would be prepared to receive that Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus would be taken up in a cloud of angels. They watched their Savior ascend into heaven. This made heaven very real. They had a friend, Savior, Master, and Mediator in heaven. They saw angels. The angels would speak to them. They must have longed for heaven even more after this special event.

Application: As we engage in this great controversy, we must have new beginnings. One of the most important new beginnings is to make things right with others, especially with fellow believers. The early disciples were prepared to receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit by coming together in unity of the faith and spirit.



New beginnings could also include having a vision for heaven. Heaven became very real to the disciples as Jesus ascending into heaven. But heaven can be just as real to us as we drawing closer to Christ each and every day. Our anticipation of His Second Coming will motivate us to thinking heavenward.

### Monday's Lesson

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Title: Pentecost

Scripture: Acts 2:5-12

When Jesus was resurrected on the day of the offering of the wave sheaf, which pointed to Him as the First Fruits, He had spent forty days with His disciples. When He ascended, the disciples had ten days of earnest prayer and confession, to prepare themselves for the Day of Pentecost.

The Holy Spirit would come upon the waiting saints like a rushing wind. They began to speak in different languages spoken by Jews from all around the world.

This powerful demonstration of the Spirit was seen by all and the results could not be denied. Three thousand precious souls were converted in a day. It mattered not their age, gender, or place of birth. What mattered was their decision concerning Jesus, the Son of God.

Application: In this great controversy we need more of the Spirit. The world is waxing worse and worse, and God's people need to become holier and holier. Otherwise, we are losing ground. How are we to reach the world if the world is increasing in wickedness at a greater rate than the saints are increasing in righteousness?

As in the case at Pentecost, there are men and women from around the world, speaking various languages ready to come into God's remnant church. But we must be empowered to speak the words of life.

### Tuesday's Lesson

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Title: Facing the Sadducees

Scripture: Acts 4:1-30

The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection or angels. There is no record of any Sadducee becoming a believer in Christ, while there were many Pharisees who did.

The Sadducees were grieved at the preaching of the disciples for two reasons. First, they did not possess official credentials as religious leaders. Second, they continuously preached the resurrection of Jesus. IN fact, the subject of the resurrection was main subject of the disciples. For the resurrection of Jesus made possible the future resurrection of the saints.



## Sabbath School Lesson Notes – February 27, 2016

Through the preaching of the disciples, the church grew. On the Day of Pentecost, three thousand souls were added to the church. Afterward, souls were added to the church daily. In verse 4, it may be referring to the total number within the early church, or that an additional 5000 souls were added to the church. In either case, the healing of the lame man caused many to believe.

Quite a gathering of the religious leaders came together to question Peter and John. It seems that they sat in a semicircle, then Peter and John were seated “in the midst,” or middle. The Sanhedrin knew that they healed in the name of Jesus, but their question came evidence of their hatred toward Jesus.

Peter’s reply wasted no time in preaching Christ and Him crucified. Peter spoke with boldness and declared that there is no other name under heaven by which men must be saved. See verse 12.

The religious leaders took notice of the boldness of Peter. They could say nothing in response, so they took counsel together. They could not deny that a miracle had taken place in the name of Jesus. They could not even deny the words of Peter. So they decided to use intimidation. They hoped that their high positions and authority would suffice in silencing the disciples from preaching Christ.

When the disciples were further threatened, they stood their ground. They would rather die and deny Christ.

Upon their release, the disciples joined with fellow believers and lifted up their voices in praise to God.

Application: The disciples were governed by God. The Sanhedrin tried to govern others. What a difference! The clear difference between the two groups, the disciples versus the Sanhedrin, was that the disciples had the truth and were converted, while the religious leaders held to their traditions and fallen natures.

To be on the right side of the great controversy we need both truth and conversion.

### Wednesday’s Lesson

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Title: The Stoning of Stephen

Scripture: Acts 7:2-53

Stephen begins his discourse in a respectful way, saying, “Men, brethren, and fathers.” He then proceeds with a focus on the manifestations of God before there was a temple. His story begins with God’s call upon Abraham. The narrative then turns to Joseph, and then Moses. There are no bigger names in Judaism. But while exalting the father of these great patriarchs, the people rebelled. Was not Joseph sold into slavery? Did not the people make the golden calf while Moses was on the mount?

And now, worse of all, the people have rejected Jesus, the Messiah. After all, which of the prophets had they not persecuted?



Application: This testimony of Stephen was the perfect blend of truth, boldness, and love. He did not withhold the truth. He did not speak as if in doubt. He had no hatred in his heart. He was a mature follower of Jesus.

It is important that we are also respectful, yet truthful. We are to be bold while reaching for the heart. And at all time we are to present the truth in the love of Jesus.

To not worry about the consequences when you take a stand for truth. God is more than able to deliver us from the hands of the enemy. But in God's wisdom, He did allow Stephen, a saint of the Most High, to close his earthly life. His testimony would be the seed of many conversions. The one most notable is that of Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

### Thursday's Lesson

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Title: Changing Attitudes

Scripture: Acts 10:12-29

While Peter was very hungry, the Lord caused Peter to go into a deep sleep. He would then give him a dream of a sheet with all kinds of animals, both clean and unclean. Peter was then commanded to eat these unclean animals. This dream was given to him three times.

Peter's emphatic response showed how strongly Peter was against eating such animals. There was in the mind of Peter and the Jewish people a very clear distinction between clean and unclean animals.

Unfortunately, the Jews made the same distinction between Jews and Gentiles. The Gentiles were considered unclean or common people, who were outside the covenants and promises of God.

Before the church could move forward in presenting the gospel to the whole world, they must have a different attitude toward Gentiles.

While Peter was perplexed as to the meaning of the dream, Cornelius, a Gentile, was on his way to see Peter. He had sent two servants and a soldier ahead of his arrival.

The Holy Spirit revealed to Peter that in the eyes of God, no man is common or unclean. Christ died for all, both Jew and Gentile.

Application: It is important that we see all men and women as having the potential of becoming sons and daughters of God. Pride has no place in the gospel ministry.

The walls of racism, socio-economic prejudice, and the many of "isms" of our world, must be laid aside for the gospel to reach the four corners of the earth. The sheet had "four corners" which we must not overlook. There is a worldwide work that must go forward. Therefore, let us minister to those near at home, and support the evangelistic endeavors in faraway lands.