

No. 2 Mini Series
Steps to Personal Revival

10 Days
Study Division



Abide in Jesus

*Jesus Christ:
"Abide in me, and I in you."*

How do you do that?

HELMUT HAUBEIL

Publisher:

TOP LIFE Wegweiser-Verlag, Wien
Austrian Publishing House

First edition in English, October 2016

Second edition in English, January 2019

Third edition - Revised with study aids, August 2019

Producer:

Konrad Print & Medien, www.konrad-medien.de

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Languages: German and English

Translations:

The Original is in German: Amharic, Arabic, Bulgarian, Danish, Dutch, Croatian, Czech, English, French, Garo-India, Hungarian, Indonesia, Italian, Kirundi-Burundi, Korean, Mongolian, Norwegian, Portuguese/Brasiliero, Portuguese/Portugal, Romanian-Video, Russian, Serbian, Slovenian-Video, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog-Philippines, Tamil-India, Ukrainian, Urdu-Pakistan. Translations into other languages are desired. Please get in touch with H. Haubeil, so that he can assist.

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Bible:

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Book 2

ABIDE IN JESUS –
HOW DO YOU DO THAT?

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Pradillo 6, Poligono Industrial 'La Mina'

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Abide in Jesus

Jesus Christ:

"Abide in me, and I in you."

How do you do that?

HELMUT HAUBEIL

A FRUITFUL LIFE

Jesus:

“... He who **abides** in Me, and I in him, bears **MUCH FRUIT** ...” John 15:5

How can I abide in Jesus?

Jesus invites us: Come to Me! (Matt. 11:28) Whoever has come to Jesus is also invited to remain. (John 15:4) And how does this work?

“Abide in Me, and I in you.”

“Abiding in Christ” means:

- a constant receiving of His Spirit,
- a life of unreserved surrender
- to His service.” Desire of Ages 676.2

This explanation really opened my eyes and gave me clarity for my walk with God. For me this is the secret to a happy Christian life. (John 15:11) It is my prayer and special wish that this will also show many the way to a joyful and fulfilled life. These words are the foundation for the three booklets in the series *Steps to Personal Revival*.

What correlation is there between the three booklets in the series *Steps to Personal Revival*?

No. 1 *Steps to Personal Revival*

Being filled with the Holy Spirit

How can you experience this?

It is about a constant asking and **receiving of His Spirit.**

No. 2 *Abide in Jesus*

How is this done?

It is about a **life of unreserved surrender to Jesus Christ.**

No. 3 *Spirit-filled Co-Workers with Jesus*

How can you become a Spirit-filled co-worker?

It is about **unreserved surrender to His service with all its brilliant consequences.**

(Available Autumn 2019)

Encouragement

Experience has shown that the study of these precious truths is particularly blessed, when, following the personal study a daily common devotion is performed in twos. There is double blessing for couples! (With others maybe telephone, Skype) Also a daily or weekly time for conversation and prayer in a group is very stimulating.

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JESUS' MOST PRECIOUS GIFT

What did Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit?

*Are you acquainted with Jesus' most
powerful message?
What functions does the Holy Spirit have?
How can our character be changed?*

Jesus' special appeal: ask for the Holy Spirit

In one particular Bible passage, Jesus emphatically commands us to ask for the Holy Spirit. I know of no other passage where Jesus so lovingly urged us to take something to heart. These verses are found in His lesson on prayer in Luke 11. There He emphasized ten times that we should ask for the Holy Spirit:

*"So I say to you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who **asks** receives, and he who **seeks** finds, and to him who **knocks** it will be opened. If a son **asks** for a bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he **asks** for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he **asks** for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who **ask Him!**" (Luk 11:9-13 NKJV)*

In these few verses, Jesus used the verb "ask" six times; then He replaced "ask" and emphasized it with "seek" two times—an action verb—and two more times with "knock"—also an action word. Doesn't He clearly show us that we have to take action in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

The last "ask" is used in the continuous tense in the Greek. That means that we are not to ask only once, but rather to ask continually. Here Jesus

makes asking not only a matter of urgency but also something He expects us to do continually. He wants to awaken our desire for the Holy Spirit with this heartfelt invitation. This urgent invitation shows us Jesus' conviction that we would be missing something crucial if we didn't continually ask for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He was calling our attention to the fact that we absolutely need the Holy Spirit. In this way, He wants us to continually receive the rich blessings of the Holy Spirit.

Commenting on the latter part of Ephesians 5:18, Johannes Mager says: "A Christian is not filled like a vessel once and for all time, but has to be constantly filled up. Therefore, the sentence [Eph 5:18] can also be rendered in this way. 'Let yourself be filled constantly and always new with the Spirit.' The infilling of the Holy Spirit, given to us in baptism, may be lost if the gift of abundance given is not retained. If it has been lost, the Spirit's presence can be received again. The filling must be renewed so that the Holy Spirit can fill all areas of our life, and so our spiritual life does not wither away.

Spirit filling does not mean that we have more and more of Him quantitatively, but rather that the Spirit has more and more of us. Therefore, Paul commands all believers [in Eph 5:18] to be continually filled with the Spirit. This is the normal state of a Christian—one baptism but many infillings."¹

This part of Jesus' lesson on praying for the Holy Spirit is a unique process. The Holy Spirit is God's greatest gift—the gift that brings all the other gifts with it. This was Jesus' crowning gift to His disciples and clear proof of His love.

Such a valuable gift would not be pushed on someone. It is only given to those who express their desire for the gift and appreciate it. I have therefore made it a habit to ask daily for the Holy Spirit in connection with John 7:37: "*If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.*" That means: Dear Lord, give me a longing for the Holy Spirit in my heart.

First reports of some who have started asking for the Holy Spirit.

Back to our "first love": A sister wrote to me: "My friend and I are currently studying the *40 Days* book for the third time, alternating with the booklet *Steps to Personal Revival*. Before we discovered this material our faith

¹ Johannes Mager, *Auf den Spuren des heiligen Geistes* (Lüneburg, Germany, Advent-Verlag, 1999), S. 101.

experience and prayer life wasn't what it had once been. We longed to find our 'first love' again. We have found it! We thank God with our whole hearts. It is so wonderful how our loving God answers prayers and that He reveals how His Spirit is working – in us and on the people we are praying for.” M. S.

Jesus entered our lives: Another person wrote about these books: “...they have become a great and long-awaited blessing in my life. Just like many other church members and a sister from our church have experienced, something was always missing in our faith experience. Now we have had the privilege of experiencing how Jesus has entered our lives and has begun to change us. He is still working in us and step by step is drawing us closer to Him.” S. K.

The Holy Spirit is the Source of a Fulfilled Life

According to Jesus, why did He come to this earth? He said: “*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*” (John 10:10) Jesus wants us to experience this new life now and for it to continue in a completely different dimension after His second coming as eternal life in God's kingdom.

He also shows us that the Source of a fulfilled life is the Holy Spirit: “*If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.*” But this He spoke concerning the Spirit.” (John 7:37-39 NKJV)

“*Rivers of living water*”—isn't that a good comparison for a fulfilled life?

During His life here on earth, did Jesus give us a corresponding example?

We know that Mary conceived Jesus through the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:18). We know that after His baptism He prayed and “*the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him*” (Luk 3:22). Was it necessary and important under these circumstances that He receive the Holy Spirit daily? Ellen White says, “Morning by morning he communicated with his Father in heaven, receiving from him daily a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit.”²

Jesus was an example to us in this. We have to ask ourselves: If Jesus daily needed a refreshing from the Holy Spirit, then how much more important is it for you and me?

² Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, November 21, 1895.

The apostle Paul understood Jesus' concern. In his letter to the church in Ephesus, Paul confirms they had been sealed by the Holy Spirit when they became believers (Eph 1:13). In Ephesians 3:16,17 he encourages them to be strong in the Spirit; in 4:30 he says, *"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit"*; and in 5:18, as an authorized apostle, he calls the Ephesians, and us, to *"be filled with the Spirit,"* or, in other words, *"let yourselves be continuously and repeatedly filled again with the Spirit."*³ We see that it is an essential daily experience for the spiritual life and growth of a Christian to be daily filled with the Holy Spirit.

"God does not say, Ask once, and you shall receive. He bids us ask. Unwearyingly persist in prayer. The persistent asking brings the petitioner into a more earnest attitude, and gives him an increased desire to receive the things for which he asks."⁴

"The baptism with the Holy Spirit means being completely under the influence of the Holy Spirit—to be completely 'filled' by Him. This isn't a one-time experience, but rather something that has to be continually repeated, as Paul illustrates in Ephesians 5:18b with the tense of the Greek verb 'filled'."⁵

Jesus' farewell words and the Holy Spirit

In Jesus' farewell words to His disciples, He conveyed joy and hope by telling them that the Holy Spirit would come to them in His place. He presented the functions of the Holy Spirit in John 16:7–14 (NKJV):

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."

3 Pub. Werner E. Lange, *Unser größtes Bedürfnis* (Lüneburg, 2011), S. 42

4 Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2003), p. 145.3

5 *Adult Bible Study Guide*, July 17, 2014.

A new advantageous Solution

Jesus told the disciples something surprising: *“It is to your advantage that I go away.”* This means that the new solution—that He is with us through the Holy Spirit—is more advantageous than Jesus being personally present. In this way, He isn’t limited, but rather He can be by the side of each person, no matter where He currently is.

Leading from unbelief and doubt to Faith in Jesus

The Holy Spirit has the task of opening the world’s eyes. And isn’t the world in the church to a certain extent? The Holy Spirit is the only One who can open the eyes of Laodicea. He awakens a desire for God in worldly people and a desire for a close relationship with Jesus in lukewarm Christians. He shows us the sin that is the cause of all other sins: *“Because they do not believe in Me.”*

Do you believe in Jesus? The core of faith is trust in Jesus. The sign that we really believe and trust in Him is that we completely commit ourselves to Him. It is a matter of complete commitment, of our willingness to follow Him in everything.

The Holy Spirit exalts Jesus. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus will become more precious and greater in value to us. A much greater appreciation for Jesus will develop in us.

Saved and Justified through Faith

The Holy Spirit opens our eyes to Jesus’ righteousness. When Jesus ascended into heaven, His sacrifice was accepted by the Father. Thus, the impossible became possible, namely that God exercised love and at the same time was just. The Holy Spirit wants to open our eyes to this invaluable exchange: Jesus takes on all the guilt from those who have entrusted themselves to Him and gives them His righteousness. This is the central teaching of the Bible: righteousness by faith in Jesus.

The Holy Spirit shows us God’s alternative

The Holy Spirit also opens our eyes to the fact that the prince of this world is already condemned. Satan has been cast out of heaven, and his ultimate end is imminent. When we are in Christ, then he basically cannot harm us, even though we repeatedly fall into temptation and can become weak here

on this earth. First John 5:18 says: *“We know that those who are children of God do not keep on sinning. The Son of God keeps them safe. The evil one can’t harm them.”* (NirV) A change of lordship has taken place in our life. Jesus wants to save us from sin and protect us from Satan’s attacks.⁶

On the other hand, the Holy Spirit also wants to open people’s eyes to the fact that the judgment is coming. No one can escape this judgment unless he or she has accepted the gift of salvation by completely surrendering to Jesus Christ and remaining in Him. It is not God’s intention to make people believe in Him through fear by pointing to the judgment. However, the knowledge that a judgment is coming can be a stimulus to repentance for many people. It would be unfair if we failed to show people the options they face in what is coming. The judgment is a decision aid for us.

The Holy Spirit gives us understanding about truth

The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth. He frees us from false perceptions, from errors and allurements. He also leads us into truth about ourselves, so that we can, with God’s help, correct our course wherever necessary.

“The Comforter is called ‘the Spirit of truth.’ His work is to define and maintain the truth. He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood.”⁷

The Holy Spirit opens our understanding of the future

The Holy Spirit also has the task of proclaiming future things to us. Jesus Himself spoke clearly about the future in Matthew 24, and the Holy Spirit has the task of giving us even more light about the future. When we give Him room, then He can also open prophecy for us.

Isn’t it amazing that all seven of the letters in Revelation 2 and 3 close with the same challenge from Jesus: *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”* (Rev 2:7) Jesus directs this call to us, the church of the last days, to listen to the Spirit. Are we ready and willing to do that?

6 This important topic is dealt with in chapter 4 of Dennis Smith’s book, *40 Days: Prayers and Devotions to Revive Your Experience With God*, book 2 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011).

7 Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2002), p. 671.

Power through the Holy Spirit

Jesus referred to the work of the Holy Spirit in His farewell speech: “*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8) Another important task of the Holy Spirit is to give us power and ability so that we can be witnesses for Him.

“Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.”⁸

Power from the Spirit is also necessary for health. Don Mackintosh, director of health evangelism leadership training at Weimar Institute, says: “What we need is information about health in connection with the power to put it into practice. It has to do with the power to change.”⁹ Here it has to do with the power of the gospel, more precisely the power of the Holy Spirit. He brings about change. We can only show others the way when we are traversing the path to better health ourselves. One thing is for sure: God’s rich blessing is waiting for us.

Putting into practice the elements of a revival

As a church we have already been praying some time for a revival. Praying for a revival is important, but as Mark Finley says, it is important to also “put into practice the biblical elements of revival”.¹⁰

A revival in the church depends on a revival of each individual. May I appeal to you to take the steps for your own personal revival? This leads you to a more powerful and fulfilled life, to a real and joyful life of faith.

Why is a new heart necessary?

Jesus said to the foolish virgins, “*I don’t know you*” (Matt 25:12). That is why they were not let into the wedding. They represent those who do not come into God’s kingdom. The reason was a lack of oil, which means for us a lack of experience of the Holy Spirit, a deficiency in one’s spiritual life. The term “foolish virgins” describes the character of those people **who have not**

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Dave Fiedler, D’Sozo: *Reversing the Worst Evil* (Coldwater, MI: Remnant, 2000), “Foreword.”

¹⁰ Mark Finley, *Revive Us Again* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2010), p. 26.

experienced a sincere change of heart through the working of the Holy Spirit.

We have a sinful nature. Thus, we are all egoists, and we suffer from this selfish nature. Since no egoists will enter God's kingdom, a change of character is absolutely necessary. God's Word shows us that everyone may come to Jesus as he or she is. But we also know that no one will remain as he or she is.

Notice that the foolish virgins don't know God because they have not completely committed their lives to Jesus and the working of the Holy Spirit. "Our salvation doesn't depend on what we know, but rather on who we know ... (John 17:3). What we know is important, but without a saving personal relationship with Jesus we are tempted and in the end lost. An understanding about God isn't the same as an intimate, heartfelt familiarity."¹¹ This is an important reason why Jesus urgently calls us to ask continually for the Holy Spirit. Do you pray daily in complete surrender and ask by faith for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

¹¹ Dennis Smith, *40 Days*, book no. 2, p. 112.

*Never underestimate the power
of one individual to help set in
motion the movements of God's Spirit
in a mighty way.
God may be calling you for
just such a time as this.*

(Please read: Esther 4:14-16)

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *What is Jesus urgently impressing on your heart concerning the Holy Spirit?*

2. *In what way was Jesus an example for us in asking for the Holy Spirit?*

3. *What diverse functions does the Comforter have, which Jesus promised to His disciples and to us?*

4. *What does the Holy Spirit accomplish in us?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *That we will daily become aware of the need to ask for the Holy Spirit and to receive Him by faith—and claim the promises that the Holy Spirit:*
 - *will lead us away from unbelief and weak faith;*
 - *will make it increasingly clear to us what righteousness by faith means;*
 - *will free us from false conceptions, mistakes, and temptations.*
 2. *Pray for unconditional surrender to Jesus and His ministry.*

*How can our
character be changed?*

**Jesus on the Holy Spirit in the Parable
About the Leaven**

In the parable about the leaven, Jesus speaks of the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit. When you first read the parable, you don't even think it could have something to do with the Holy Spirit: *"And again He said, 'To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened'"* (Luk 13:20,21)

Leaven, or yeast, is used in baking different kinds of bread. When it is added to flour, it starts a fermentation process that makes the dough softer and lighter. In this way it is made more enjoyable to human taste.

Jesus wants to make certain principles of God's kingdom clear to us through this illustration. The leaven represents a marvelous process in us, which starts very small but then has an astonishing end, as the parable says: "till it was all leavened." Jesus wants to grow His selfless love in us in place of our egoism.

In one sense of this parable, Jesus wants to show the influence of the gospel on the world. Even though the gospel started out small, it will permeate the whole world in the end. In another sense, Jesus is showing us how God's life-changing power works in us through the Holy Spirit. He says in Luke 17:20,21, *"The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst."* (NIV)

For the people of the first century, the kingdom of God was in their midst through the person of Jesus. Today, the kingdom of God begins in our lives when we receive Jesus as our Savior and Lord. When we remain in Him and He remains in us, then at Jesus' second coming the visible kingdom will begin for us. Right now, we want to look at the development of the kingdom of God within us by the in-dwelling of Jesus. He can only live in us through the Holy Spirit. Below are important lessons from the parable.

The changing power works quietly

The “leaven is used to represent the kingdom of heaven. It illustrates the quickening, assimilating power of the grace of God.”¹² “The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit.”¹³ Here it has to do with an inner power that pervades everything and can completely change us. In this way, God wants to positively change our character through the Holy Spirit.

The Bible tells us that the first era of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in biblical times was sometimes accompanied by audible and visible indications. But character change within us happens quietly—provided that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. And then we suddenly discover that a positive change has taken place in us.

The leaven hidden in the flour works invisibly to bring the whole mass under its leavening process; so the leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up—the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are roused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. We are endowed with traits of character that enable us to do service for God.”¹⁴

Why does God change us so quietly, so imperceptibly until we see the result? A quiet time is necessary for change just as nature goes through when it revives from winter. Strong plants such as oaks grow very slowly. Does God tests us in this way to see if we really have a desire for the Holy Spirit? Does He test our faith? I think so. And He wants to give us a fruitful life (see John 15:1–8; Gal 5:22).

The power that changes our character comes from outside—it is not within us.

First, we have to realize: “Man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change can be effected. The leaven—something wholly from without—must be put into the meal before the desired change can be wrought in it.”¹⁵ Jesus shows us here that we need a power that comes from outside of us for character change.

¹² Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 96.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 97.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 98, 99.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

Shouldn't we consider Jesus' words about such an important issue? "*For without Me you can do nothing!*" (John 15:5) "In order that we may have the righteousness of Christ, we need daily to be transformed by the influence of the Spirit, to be a partaker of the divine nature. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole" person.¹⁶

This important advice from Jesus is completely opposite of what is usually taught today. Whether in humanism or esotericism, human philosophy or some areas of pedagogy, the message is that the power for us to develop is within ourselves. It only has to be awakened by this or that method. "Self-realization" is often talked about. The apostle Paul said about himself, and it applies to us all: "*For I know that in me ... nothing good dwells*" (Rom 7:18). Under these conditions, what would be the result of self-realization? We can read about it in 2 Timothy 3:1: "*There will be terrible times in the last days*" (NIV). Egoism will reign. For us it doesn't have to do with self-realization but rather with Christ-realization. Someone said to me: "I have found my self-realization in Christ." The main thing is that the Holy Spirit lives in us and changes us positively.

Of ourselves we have no power to change our character. It has to come from outside. That is why Jesus so clearly called our attention in Luke 11:9–13 to the fact that we should ask for the Holy Spirit—continually. During Jesus' time here on this earth, He was daily refilled with the Holy Spirit. For us it is even more essential. When I think of what God wants to daily give us through the Holy Spirit, I then think that our wonderful God wants to hug us every morning, just like a married couple hugs every morning.

Ellen White says about this parable: "All the culture and education which the world can give will fail of making a degraded child of sin a child of heaven. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. All who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power."¹⁷

Winston Churchill, prime minister in Great Britain during World War II, is supposed to have said: We have gained control of everything with one exception: people. People cannot be radically changed by human influence alone. For this to happen, a power from out of this world is necessary. It has

16 Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, bk. 1 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2007), p. 374.

17 Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 96, 97.

to do with the power of God, which can only effectively work in us through the Holy Spirit.

God's Word tells us that the inward man is being renewed day by day (2 Cor 4:16). It is very important to daily—first thing in the morning is best—ask in faith for the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit begins His work in our hearts and then works outwards

The next important lesson Jesus taught in the parable about the leaven is that when we have the leavening effect of the Holy Spirit, we will begin to do things differently from the inside out: “As the leaven, when mingled with the meal, works from within outward, so it is by the renewing of the heart that the grace of God works to transform the life. No mere external change is sufficient to bring us into harmony with God. There are many who try to reform by correcting this or that bad habit, and they hope in this way to become Christians, but they are beginning in the wrong place. Our first work is with the heart.”

And further: “A profession of faith and the possession of truth in the soul are two different things. The mere knowledge of truth is not enough. We may possess this, but the tenor of our thoughts may not be changed. The heart must be converted and sanctified.

The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely—because he is required to do so—will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within.”¹⁸

As the revival advances in us, what we think and do and say arises from the Holy Spirit's work. Others will see the difference in how we live. Ralph Luther comments: “Jesus vigorously objected to acknowledging faith that is a mere inner religious attitude, which leaves practical life unchanged at the root.”¹⁹

In *The Desire of Ages* we read: “The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

¹⁹ Ralph Luther, *Neutestamentliches Wörterbuch*, S. 71, quoted in O. S. von Bibra, *Der Name Jesus* (Wuppertal, 1964), S. 98.

Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ. Only those who are thus taught of God, those who possess the inward working of the Spirit, and in whose life the Christ-life is manifested, are to stand as representative men, to minister in behalf of the church.”²⁰

In summary, Jesus taught the following about the Holy Spirit:

- ▶ The life-changing power of the Holy Spirit works in us imperceptibly. We often just notice the results.
- ▶ The changing power in our life has to come from outside of ourselves.
- ▶ The changing power starts in our hearts and then works outward.

I strongly recommend that you read the chapter on the parable of the leaven in the book *Christ's Object Lessons*.

Jesus' last words: Listen to the Holy Spirit

Do you know what the last words are that Jesus spoke from His glory in heaven to the end-time church? “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*” (Rev 3:22) Jesus calls each of us to listen to the Holy Spirit, and that is what we want to do.

Change me!?

Can Jesus really change me? Let's take a beautiful painting as an example. Its value doesn't come from the quality of material used. Only a little paint, sometimes even of low quality, in the hand of an expert can be transformed into a valuable painting. Likewise, we have a sinful nature, “low-quality” material. It is only important that this “material” is being worked on by a great artist. Jesus wants to do this, and He is able to do it. He can form you and me into something that honors Him. Completely commit yourself daily into His hands and ask in faith for the Holy Spirit. You will be amazed at what He can do for you, in you, and through you.

An old man sat on London Bridge and was playing his violin. There were only a few coins in his hat. A man walked past him but then returned and said to the man: “Give me your violin for a moment.” He started to play so beautifully that more and more people stopped to listen. It even caused chaos in the traffic. The man's name was Niccolò Paganini, the famous violinist.

²⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 805.

It is your choice if you want to play first violin in your life or if you want to place your life in the hands of the great Master.

A personal testimony from a teacher and one of her students

“When the booklet *Steps to Personal Revival* was handed out in my home church about a year ago, I read it through very quickly. Already while reading it I had more experiences with God than ever before. This fascinated and encouraged me. In the booklet’s appendix I found the following suggestion: ‘Pedagogical research has shown that it is necessary to read or listen six to ten times to a vital topic till we can thoroughly understand it.’ These encouraging words captivated my attention: ‘Try it at least once. The result will convince you.’

I wanted to experience that, and already by the third reading it overcame me and I felt a great love for our Redeemer, which I had yearned for my whole life. Within two months I had read it through six times and the result was worth it. It was as if I could understand what it would be like when Jesus comes close to us and we can look into His pure, kind, and loving eyes. From then on, I didn’t want to be without this joy in our Savior.

When I woke up in the morning I already yearned for my morning worship time in order to again experience fellowship with God, and during the day I prayed quietly that the Holy Spirit would help me with my thoughts during conversations and in my example while teaching and communicating.

When a child craved attention and acted accordingly, God gave me strength and wisdom to deal with it. Since then my work days are filled with the presence of the Creator. He helps me literally in my everyday life. Since then I pray in the morning and in between times for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is as if one is closer to heaven and can already taste what it will be like there.

While reading the booklet the thought came to me that my students in the school should also share in this experience. I teach ten to fifteen year-olds in our Elijah Adventist school in Vorarlberg, Austria. So I prayed for God to give me opportunities. Very soon afterwards I had one of my most wonderful experiences with how the Holy Spirit can work in young people’s hearts.”

A 13-year-old Ruffian and the Holy Spirit

“The experience started a year before I read the booklet on the Holy Spirit. A new student came to our school and within a few days our peaceful oasis was changed into a rough and scuffle room. The boy was thirteen years old then. He was the biggest of all the children and correspondingly strong. Many things that had been learned during the school year and had brought wonderful fruit seemed to disappear in a moment.

Let him share it in his own words: ‘When I came to my present school, I had no idea what awaited me. On my second day of school I let myself get provoked, so I snapped and started a fight with one of my classmates. I hit him even though he was considerably weaker than I was, berated him and never wanted to see him again. Later I realized my mistake and apologized, just as I had always done in the past. After that I had a conversation with the headmaster. In the next months a process started in me. It is astonishing that this had never happened before, as I was a pastor’s son! I started to spend more time with Jesus.’

“I thought this young person would need extra special attention. He was aware of his failure, regretted it, and tried again, but he didn’t have long-lasting success in his own strength. At first, hardly a day would go by without him being in a fight, but gradually it got better. After six months he said he thought it was the prayers that had brought him closer to God. In the meantime, he had started praying for strength in the morning. His fits of rage and fights became less frequent.

Eleven months had gone by since he came to our school, and we could see even more improvements. However, his anger, swearing, outbursts and his fists weren’t permanently under control. It was only natural - he tried to win in his own strength and understanding. This worked sometimes and other times not at all. Our prayers had made some achievement but his mindset still wasn’t right, plus the renewing power of the Spirit was missing.

What good does it do when a person sees their mistakes, tries to control their temper, and in the next moment fails again? Just at the time when I realized that I was at my wits’ end, I received the booklet mentioned above. It came at just the right time. Then I realized what we were missing. It was the power of the Holy Spirit. We hadn’t even asked Him to help us!

Since I had been touched by the message of Steps to Personal Revival, I got up my courage to ask the boy if he had ever prayed for the Holy Spirit. No, he said, he never had. Then I tried to awaken his interest in the booklet.

I didn't give it to him though. I thought that He should really want it. And very soon he did ask for the booklet.

Again, in his own words: "In November 2012 my teacher gave me the booklet *Steps to Personal Revival*. I eagerly started to read it. At that time I wasn't really acquainted with the work of the Holy Spirit."

Within the first day he had already devoured almost two chapters and then he asked me how many times I had read it. He immediately started to read the chapters again and wanted to do exactly what the booklet suggested: reading it six to ten times.

Since then a lot has changed. From December 2012 on there weren't any more fist fights or scuffles—I could hardly believe it. The boys that he had beaten up every day became his friends, and they get along harmoniously. He has completely changed—he is polite and even obliging, and peacefulness has taken over his aggressive nature. His classmates can confirm that God was at work. He is letting God work in him. You can see the fruits every day. To God's glory I want to mention that the boy decided to get baptized in June 2013. If that wasn't the Holy Spirit ...

I have always thought that I could manage a child and make them see reason. Patience, attention, and lots of talks would do it, but it just didn't work long-term with this boy. God had to intervene and taught me that it is His Spirit who makes the impossible possible. Someday when this boy is in heaven, then I will know that God brought it about. When I was at the end of my wisdom and finally understood that I couldn't guide him, then God started to radically work on him. It encourages me to see that there are no hopeless cases for God."—C. P.

***Prayer:** Father in heaven, thank you for the invaluable gift of the Holy Spirit. Please forgive me for neglecting the Holy Spirit. From now on help me to give Him the highest regard. I ask you to lift my daily life to a new level. Please work on me so that I ask daily for the Holy Spirit. Jesus asked daily for the Holy Spirit. Please help me to follow His example.*

*Let the words you speak
always be full of grace.
Season them with salt.
Then you will know how
to answer everyone.*

Colossians 4:6

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *What teachings about the ministry of the Holy Spirit can we learn from the parable of the leaven?*

a) *How does our character transformation happen?*

b) *What does Jesus' statement, "Without Me you can do nothing" mean for our character transformation?*

c) *What do we understand about the way the Holy Spirit works in our character transformation?*

2. *Jesus is the Artist, and we are His painting. What lessons can we learn from this thought?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *That by God's active grace we will experience constant growth.*
 2. *That we will continually be aware that the changing power comes from outside of us and not out of ourselves, no matter how strong-willed we may be.*
 3. *That the Holy Spirit's power to change us will become increasingly apparent in our lives.*
 4. *That we will consciously discern the changing power of God in other people.*
 5. *That we can assist people when God wants to use us as a helping hand.*

SURRENDER TO JESUS

*Do I lose my own will?
Or will I become stronger?
What can prevent me from surrendering
myself to Jesus?
Does surrender to God mean that we have to give
up our own will?*

We cannot emphasize this encouraging message enough: we are saved by faith (John 3:16; Acts 16:31, and others). The primary trait of biblical faith is trust. Whoever trusts Jesus will entrust themselves to Him. This means that we are saved because we entrust ourselves to God through Jesus Christ. Our trusting surrender is a clear, visible sign of true faith.

Full surrender is the key to salvation, to rebirth, to victory over sin and temptation, and to fullness of the Holy Spirit.²¹

“Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest.”²² The Holy Spirit is the crowning gift that Jesus gave to His disciples. God could not give more than this. The Holy Spirit is the gift that brings forth all other gifts. “But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord’s promise; they talk *about* Christ and *about* the Holy Spirit, yet they receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies.”²³

Receiving this gift is bound with conditions. We often speak about Christ and the Holy Spirit and still we do not receive any blessing. Why?

21 Garrie F. Williams, *How to Be Filled With the Holy Spirit and Know It*, German version (Lüneburg, 2007), p. 78.

22 Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 672.

We do not completely surrender to Him, so that we can be led and guided by Him. Many have not surrendered themselves to God—often out of ignorance—but rather have taken their lives into their own hands. This can be the reason for a deficiency in the Holy Spirit. “All may be certain that faithfulness in little things is the evidence of fitness for greater responsibilities. ...

“... [When it isn’t done then] he fails of gaining the grace, the power, the force of character, which is received through unreserved surrender.”²⁴

My journey to surrender

I was a businessman, age thirty-six, when a friend who was a pastor suddenly passed away. This brought the question to my mind: What would happen if God called me to be a pastor? I did not want this at all. For a whole week, I fought a bitter fight. I negotiated with God in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. Each time I explained to Him why I did not want to become a minister and what I could do instead. After a week, I had to admit that God apparently did not hear my objections. As I was kneeling at my bedside and didn’t have any further arguments, a quiet thought came to my mind: “*God loves you!*” And I thought: *Yes, I believe this.*

After a few minutes, trust in God’s love led me to completely surrender myself to the Lord. After that, I was at great peace. As a matter of fact, the Lord called me one and a half years later to be a pastor. Today I am still extremely grateful to Him. It was His endless love and wisdom that showed me a completely different way than the one I had in mind. In retrospect, I clearly see that this surrender released great blessings in my life. God led me the best way possible in my life.

Why surrender?

The term *surrender* is aptly explained in the book *Steps to Christ*: “God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him. ...

... He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may

²⁴ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2002), pp. 218, 219.

work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God.”²⁵

Our surrender to God brings an immense blessing. He invites us to surrender ourselves to Him because He wants to heal us and free us. From what?

Every soul that refuses to give himself to God is under the control of another power. He is not his own. He may talk of freedom, but he is in the most abject slavery. He is not allowed to see the beauty of truth, for his mind is under the control of Satan. While he flatters himself that he is following the dictates of his own judgment, he obeys the will of the prince of darkness. Christ came to break the shackles of sin-slavery from the soul. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” “*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” sets us “*free from the law of sin and death.*” (Rom 8:2)²⁶

“The law of the Spirit of life is the live-giving power of the Holy Spirit. . . . The Spirit brings life and freedom, in contrast with the law of sin, which produces only death and condemnation.”²⁷

When Jesus is allowed to guide our lives, then He is able to free us from the tyranny of our self (envy, resentment, quarrelsomeness, greed, addiction, anger, pride, conceit, discouragement, inferiority complexes, and so on). “In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom.”²⁸ Remember: every human being is his or her own biggest problem. You are your biggest problem. Only God is capable of leading us to real freedom.

But a potter can only work with the clay that is in his hands. That’s why we surrender to God. This is how God wants to free us from the power of sin and give us divine guidance and protection.

“God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him.”²⁹ “The surrender of all our powers to God greatly simplifies the problem of life. It weakens and cuts short a thousand struggles with the passions of the natural heart.”³⁰

25 Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1999), pp. 43, 44.

26 Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 466.

27 *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol.6, p. 560 to Rom. 8,2

28 Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 466.

29 Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 43.

30 Ellen G. White, *My Life Today* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999), p. 6.

What does the Bible say about surrender?

Romans 6:13 says, *“Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness”* (NIV). According to this text, surrender means to yield yourself to God and to place yourself at His disposal.

Hanna W. Smith, a Christian author, comments on this text as follows: “To surrender something means as much as to hand over something, to give something into the possession and administration of someone else. To surrender ourselves to the Lord means the same thing. Subsequently, the Lord has the power of control and ownership of us. This means renunciation of ourselves and surrender of our self.”³¹

Romans 12:1 says: *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship”* (NIV). What reason does this text give for surrendering our lives to God? “The mercies of God.” Surrender is our answer to a God of mercy, a God of love.

Surrender means completely placing ourselves in God’s hands, being at His disposal, giving our lives to Him as a sacrifice, not as an Old Testament sacrifice that was burnt, but as a living sacrifice that lives for Him from the moment of surrender.

When I look back at my life, I can say that before my surrender it seemed to me that surrender was a sacrifice. Afterwards, I realized that it wasn’t a sacrifice, but rather it was an infinite blessing.

Johannes Mager comments: “Surrender, abandonment, commitment, being entirely at God’s disposal—these are serious, but uplifting terms. Surrender has nothing to do with emotions or moods. It means to give ourselves to the One we love.”³²

Second Corinthians 5:15 says what the result of surrender is: *“Christ died for everyone. He died so that those who live should not live for themselves anymore. They should live for Christ. He died for them and was raised again”* (NIRV). Surrender means living for Jesus.

To live for Jesus does not merely mean serving Him full time, but rather: *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”* (Col 3:17, NIV).

31 Hanna W. Smith, *Christsein täglich* (To Be a Christian Daily) (Asslar, 1994), p. 38.

32 Johannes Mager, *Unser größtes Bedürfnis* (Our Greatest Need) (Lüneburg, 2011), S. 47, 48.

Charles T. Studd said, “If Jesus Christ is God and died for me, then no sacrifice is too great for me to bring to Him.”³³ This man practiced what he said. He was a top athlete in England. When he became a Christian, he gave up his career, donated his millions to a missionary society, and went to China as a missionary, later to India, and finally to Africa. The missionary society he founded is still active with 1,800 missionaries working worldwide. He surrendered his life to Jesus.

Jesus gave Himself for us and to us

An essential fact should not be overlooked. Surrender is not a one-sided affair. Jesus gave Himself to us first. He gave us everything that God could give, and He invites us to give everything that we can give. It is a matter of everything for everything. Only there is a world of difference between God’s everything and my everything. Even so, nobody can give more or less than everything.

- ▶ Surrender leads to a marvelous relationship with Jesus and the Father. (You will abide in Him—John 14:23; Jesus will manifest Himself to you—John 14:21.)
- ▶ Through surrender we come to a knowledge of truth. (John 7:17—If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know... ESV)
- ▶ Through surrender we gain great power in prayer. (1 John 3:22—Whatever we ask for, we will receive.)
- ▶ Surrender is the way to perfect joy. (John 15:11—Your joy may be full.)
- ▶ Surrender is the key to an abundant life. (John 10:10; Eph 3:19.)
- ▶ Surrender is the foundation so that God can work through my life. (John 7:38—rivers of living water; John 14:12—greater works; John 15:4, 5—much fruit.)
- ▶ Satan is denied access to those who are surrendered to God. (1 John 5:18—the wicked one does not touch him, except under God’s specific permission, as in the case of Job. All things work together for good and are never more than what we are able to bear.)

Five levels of surrender

One author speaks about five levels of surrender:

- ▶ Giving money is the lowest level of surrender.
- ▶ Next is the surrender of time.

33 Norman B. Grubb, Charles Studd, *Kein Opfer zu groß* (No Sacrifice Is Too Great), “Introduction.”

- ▶ Then comes the surrender of our power and skills, our service.
- ▶ After that, the surrender of all our fears and hopes, which includes everything mentioned before.
- ▶ The surrender of our whole being, which means completely surrendering our will and life to Jesus.³⁴ This last point describes real surrender.

It's wonderful when we surrender ourselves to our heavenly Father, because we trust in His love and do not let things go so far as the prodigal son did in Jesus' parable. He capitulated when he hit rock bottom in his life, and only then did he decide to go back home. As he came close to his parents' house, his father came to meet him and wrapped his arms around him. He fully accepted him as his son. Only then did the son clearly comprehend his father's love. This turned his capitulation into a surrender of love.

A tragic incident

The following incident occurred in France and helps illustrate this: The wife of a rich Frenchman confided a secret to someone. She was carrying a small bottle of poison in her hand. She was planning to take her life because of difficulties in her marriage. She said, "Just yesterday I complained to my husband, but he answered in surprise and bewilderment: 'What more do you want? You have my checkbook [meaning that she had his money at her disposal], you own my house, you eat at my table. Everything that prosperity and rank can offer you belongs to you, and yet you complain?' I told him," the woman continued, "'I want your heart, I want you to love me.' And he exclaimed: 'You can't have that. You know that my heart belongs to another woman. Everything I own is yours, but my heart, my love, it is impossible for you to demand that from me.'" ³⁵

No one who loves someone would be happy with such an answer. The woman didn't care how much her husband owned. What did matter to her was him as a person.

"Our great Lord does not want something from me. He wants me. Jesus doesn't want part of my time or part of my assets, nor of my talents or abilities." ³⁶ He wants me, because He loves me and wants to make me happy.

We ought to surrender ourselves; we ought to hand over our self with everything we have and everything we are. We ought to surrender ourselves

³⁴ Dean M. Kelley, "How Adventism Can Stop Growing," *Ministry*, February 1983, p. 4.

³⁵ Oswald Smith, *The Man God Uses* (New York: The Christian Alliance Publishing Company, 1925), p. 26.

³⁶ Johannes Mager, *Unser größtes Bedürfnis* (Our Greatest Need) (Lüneburg, Werner E. Lange, 2011), S. 48.

to the care, leadership, direction, and will of God. This is our reasonable service that Romans 12:1 calls us to.

When the Word of God says about complete surrender, “[This] is your reasonable service,” then it can only mean that surrender to God is the most reasonable thing we can do. What is more reasonable than to put our case into the hands of a skillful physician when we are sick? What is more reasonable than to entrust ourselves to an experienced guide when we are lost?

Complete surrender is not a loss, but rather a huge asset. Compared with God, I am poor, foolish, and helpless. Wouldn’t it be sensible to place myself in God’s hands? I should trust the One who created me, who wanted me to be, who loves me and can care for all my needs. Through our surrender, God’s infinite love and power are on our side. This is entering a life led by God.

Our complete surrender is the beginning of a more abundant life (John 10:10) that Jesus wants to give us. And this surrender also brings victory over evil, as Revelation 12:11 affirms: “*And they overcame him [1] by the blood of the Lamb and [2] by the word of their testimony, and [3] they did not love their lives to death.*” This shows that complete surrender is necessary to overcome sin and Satan, and that this is the best thing we can do.

In *Christ’s Object Lessons*, we read the following: “Let no one say, I cannot remedy my defects of character. If you come to this decision, you will certainly fail of obtaining everlasting life. The impossibility lies in your own will. If you will not, then you cannot overcome. The real difficulty arises from the corruption of an unsanctified heart, and an unwillingness to submit to the control of God.”³⁷ “To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of lost humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling.”³⁸

We see here that:

- ▶ The Holy Spirit lived in Jesus without measure.
- ▶ He desires for us to live in complete surrender so that the Holy Spirit can live in us to the same extent.
- ▶ For this reason, Jesus gave the command: “Be filled with the Spirit.” In the original Greek text, this means: “Let yourself be continually and repeatedly filled with the Holy Spirit” (see Eph 5:18).
- ▶ His object is that we will have life more abundantly (see John 10:10; Col 2:10).

³⁷ Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 331.

³⁸ Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1999), p. 20.

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *What is the divine condition to receive the Holy Spirit?*

2. *What does complete surrender mean, and what effect does it have?*

3. *Full surrender is a key? Which blessings can I only receive through it?*

4. *What are the five levels of surrender? Only one level is really surrender. Which is it? Think about your surrender.*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *For a better understanding of what it means to be saved by faith.*
 2. *In thanks to God for the blessings of surrender that you have already experienced.*
 3. *That the Holy Spirit will lead you on your life's path and in all your life's decisions.*

*What Can Prevent Us
From Surrendering?
Does surrender to God mean that we
have to give up our own will?*

For me, the barrier to surrendering was concern about my job. To be precise, I was worried that after my surrender, God would call me to be a pastor.

Edwin Orr encountered different obstacles. This was clear to him in his youth. He said:

I had to surrender completely to the Lord. ... For the first time in my life I realized that God was talking to me. The Holy Spirit spoke to my heart. I told the Lord I was completely willing to surrender everything to Him. The voice in my heart asked: "What about your favorite sins?" ... I confessed them and promised never to repeat them. The voice inside me continued: "What about your will?" This came as a complete surprise to me. ... So I told the Lord: I'm ready to go wherever you want me to go or to remain at home. ... Then the Spirit of God spoke to me about an idol I cherished in my life. It was a girl that I loved very much. The Lord asked me whether I would be willing to give up this girl if He asked me to. Suddenly I realized that my will put up a barricade at this point. I did not want to make such a sacrifice. ... At this point the Holy Spirit stopped talking to me. All at once, my heart became alarmingly void. I soon realized this, and then I again felt a longing to be filled with the Spirit. This time I surrendered myself completely to the Lord. I was ready to surrender even this part of my life to Him. ... My heart was filled with indescribable love, joy, and power. ... For the first time in my life I felt that I really knew my God and Savior and that Christianity was more than a doctrine or philosophy.³⁹

God achieved great things through Edwin Orr's life.

In my case, the obstacle was my job, while with Edwin Orr, it was a girl. Whatever the case may be for you, if you have not yet completely surrendered yourself to the Lord, put yourself and your problem into His hands. The Lord will greatly bless you.

³⁹ J. Edwin Orr, *Volle Hingabe* (Full Surrender) (Kassel, 1965), S. 108ff., shortened.

The Lord respects our decisions

If you were all knowing, you would choose the same path that God wants to lead you on. We can cast off every fear and reservation when we completely surrender to the God of infinite love.

God will never act against the free will of a human being. Our wonderful God respects our personality. Freedom is one of the most precious gifts God has given us. That's why God waits for our consent and acts only when we ask Him to. Freedom is a divine prerequisite. Love can only develop under freedom.

Does surrender to God mean that we have to give up our own will?

Do we not completely lose our will when we surrender to God. Do we become puppets and God is pulling the strings? NO!

Why not? Because by giving ourselves completely to God we substitute our foolish, misguided, ignorant, and immature will for the perfect, magnificent, and wise will of God. We are placing ourselves under divine navigation.

We should not give up our will, but rather the wrong use of it. The will that should be given up is the one that differs from the will of God. It is the exercising of our stubbornness.

Ellen White wrote, "But one says, 'Can I not have my own way, and act myself?'—No, you cannot have your way, and enter the kingdom of heaven. No 'my way' will be there. No human ways will find place in the kingdom of heaven. Our ways must be lost in God's ways."⁴⁰ (See also Isa 53:6.)

Whoever refuses to be guided by God and His Word is living on the basis of his own limited mind instead of depending on "divine navigation." "When our will is in harmony with God's will, it remains untouched; as a matter of fact it would be wrong to relinquish it."⁴¹

"As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command, may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings."⁴² "When we let the Holy Spirit guide us, then we are not cramped or limited. Instead, we are living in max-

⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, February 23, 1892.

⁴¹ H. W. Smith, *Christsein täglich* (Being a Christian Daily), S. 73.

⁴² Ellen G. White, *Christian Service* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999), p. 258.

imum freedom. In 2 Corinthian 3:17 we read: ‘... and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.’”⁴³

Other blessings of our surrender

He who will give himself fully to God will be guided by the divine hand. He may be lowly and apparently ungifted; yet if with a loving, trusting heart he obeys every intimation of God’s will, his powers will be purified, ennobled, energized, and his capabilities will be increased. As he treasures the lessons of divine wisdom, a sacred commission will be entrusted to him; he will be enabled to make his life an honor to God and a blessing to the world. *“The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”* (Psalm 119:130 NIV)

There are today many as ignorant of the Holy Spirit’s work upon the heart as were those believers in Ephesus; yet no truth is more clearly taught in the word of God.”⁴⁴

Life under divine navigation

Doesn’t Proverbs 3:5,6 contradict this? It says, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight”* (NIV)

Many think this means that they have to turn off their minds or, put another way, to turn off their powers of reasoning. Nothing could be more wrong. God wants us to use our reason. He invites us to connect our reason with His infinite reason.

Didn’t God give Daniel and his friends, who were obedient with their whole hearts in small things as well as great things, tenfold greater intelligence? God wants us to maximize the whole potential of our minds and at the same time connect with His infinite mind.

It’s like driving a car with a navigation device. I have to use my whole reason to drive, but it is well-advised for me to trust the GPS about turns, speed limits, notification of traffic jams or detours, the best way to reach my destination, or how much time until I reach my destination. I remember well when I borrowed in order to test it a navigation device when I needed

⁴³ David Wolkwitz, *Der Weg zu einer kraftvollen Erweckung*, (NRW-Vereinigung), S. 25.

⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2002), pp. 283, 284.

to attend a funeral in an unfamiliar part of Munich. The GPS did its job, and I was able to reach my destination without any problems.

Rely on God, on His instructions, on His standards, His counsels, and go your way under divine navigation.

Doubt about the instruments

During World War II, a British aircraft took off from Sicily and headed for North Africa. Since all the airports had blackouts, the pilots had to rely completely on their instruments. Although they hadn't flown the calculated time yet, the instruments were showing that they had reached their destination. They thought this was impossible, so the pilots kept on flying.

Not until they were far out over the Sahara did they realize their mistake. They ran out of fuel and had to make an emergency landing in the desert. Since they did not have enough water on board, the whole crew ended up dying of thirst. Later, when the aircraft was discovered, rescuers found that all the instruments were functioning properly. The aircraft had been in a fast airstream and thus reached its destination more quickly than usual. However, the pilots trusted their own calculations more than their instruments, which was fatal for them. They made their own decision, and it was the wrong decision.⁴⁵ We can rely on God's leadership. It is better to rely on God's Word than on our own assumptions.

People with backbone

Through our surrender to Jesus Christ, we do not become weak-willed; rather we will be people with a backbone, who defend their standpoint with wisdom and politeness.

Think again about Daniel and his friends. As young people, they proved they had backbone and were loyal to God during the test of their diet in Daniel 1. Or think about their phenomenal decision in front of the fiery furnace, as mentioned in chapter 3, when they were middle aged. And think about Daniel's attitude as an older man when he was in front of the lions' den, as mentioned in chapter 6.

⁴⁵ *Aller Diener* (Bern, Euro-Africa Division, 1983) II/III, S. 142.

Self-esteem or esteem through Christ

Anyone who surrenders themselves to Christ doesn't have to worry about their self-esteem, because they have much greater esteem through Christ.

In *The Ministry of Healing* we read: "Many who are qualified to do excellent work accomplish little because they attempt little. Thousands pass through life as if they had no great object for which to live, no high standard to reach. One reason for this is the low estimate which they place upon themselves. Christ paid an infinite price for us, and according to the price paid He desires us to value ourselves."⁴⁶ A sister shared with me after she had begun to live in the Holy Spirit: "I have found my self-esteem in Christ."

Counseling because of problems in surrender

A young man sought a counseling session with a minister, because he wanted to be filled with the Holy Spirit and was struggling with it. The minister asked him, "Have you completely surrendered your will to God?"

"Not completely, I'm afraid."

"Well," answered the minister, "it is useless to pray for the Holy Spirit before you have completely surrendered your will to God. Don't you want to surrender it to the Lord right now?"

"I can't," the young man replied.

"Are you willing for God to do it for you?"

"Yes," was his answer.

"Then ask the Lord now."

The young man prayed: "O Lord, empty me of my self-will. Bring me to a complete surrender to Your will. Lay my will down for me. I ask in Jesus' name."

Then the minister asked him: "Did it happen?"

"It must have," he replied. "I asked God for something according to His will, and I know that my prayer was heard and that I have received what I asked for (1 John 5:14,15). Yes, it happened. My will lies here."⁴⁷ He then prayed for the Holy Spirit and received Him. It is wonderful that our loving Father is even willing to create and deliver the prerequisites in us when we ask Him to.

We can learn two things from this man's prayer. First, the young man was already acquainted with praying with promises. In his prayer, he relied

⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2003), p. 498.

⁴⁷ R. A. Torrey, *Der Heilige Geist—Sein Wesen und Wirken* (Frankfurt: 1966), S. 151; (The Holy Spirit—His Nature and Ministry).

on the promises of the Lord that prayers prayed according to God's will are answered at the very moment they are spoken. Second, the young man decided to accept the help of God in surrendering himself.

Steering our life with decisions

We should know that the ability to make free will decisions is the guiding authority in our lives. I want to give you an example in order to better explain the full meaning of this ability.

The hull of the passenger liner the *Queen Elizabeth* weighs 1,300 times more than her rudder. This means that the rudder is able to steer a bulk that is 1,300 times bigger than itself. The rudder in our life is our ability to make decisions. If we decide to submit ourselves to the will of God, then He places all necessary assistance at our disposal.

Challenges

In the matter of surrendering ourselves to Christ, the decision we face is to live for ourselves or to live for God. Every person, but especially the young person, has to ask themselves if their ego should control their lives or if they want to serve God. Material goods and sensual pleasures can provide an illusion of happiness, but these things bring no real satisfaction—we always want more. The more he has, the more he wants, his complaints never stop, says a well-known German proverb.

Finally, we realize that these things have taken possession of us.

A further challenge we have to take into consideration is the fact that other people with a certain amount of authority over our lives, for example our family, school, church, company or society, expect things from us that contradict God's expectations. When we surrender our lives to Jesus, then we will have the power and courage to give God's expectations the highest priority and be able to defend our standpoint with wisdom and politeness (Please read Daniel 1: Vers 8 Daniels decision; the Lord's multiple help in V. 9, 14, 15, 17, 20)

Is it sufficient to surrender my life one time to God?

We begin with a fundamental surrender to Jesus Christ at our conversion. This surrender, which takes place in prayer and after appropriate biblical

instruction and conviction, is sealed with baptism and is valid for all eternity. God's Word calls this basic surrender to Jesus our covenant with God.

Daily surrender is something quite different. Since it is often also called dedication, conversion, or consecration, this expression may cause some confusion. In order to make things clear, I will call it consecration. The daily consecration (or surrender or conversion) means that today I want to live out the basic covenant I have made with God; I want to stand for the covenant today. That's why it is invaluable to pray daily: "Lord, I surrender myself to You today with everything that I am and everything that I have."

The Bible compares our covenant with Christ to a marriage. If I remain in this covenant, then I don't need to worry about anything at all. God is able to safeguard everything that is entrusted to Him. He always keeps His word. He will not file for divorce.

Morris Venden comments, "Obviously, getting married doesn't mean much if you don't plan to stay married. And you can't stay married if you've never gotten married in the first place."⁴⁸

In order to retain the positive consequences of our fundamental surrender, it is necessary to abide in Jesus. That is why Jesus talks about "abiding" nine times in John 15, including, for example, verses 5 and 15. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (KJV)

Abundant life comes from abiding in Jesus. Through fellowship with Him, we are able to lead a fruitful life—a life of joy, power, and victory. God is able to do great things in our lives. When we are seized by this truth, it will revolutionize our lives.

Lit up the flame: Coming from an Adventist background, I have always been immersed in religion. At the age of 13, I decided to be baptized. However, my spiritual life remained monotonous, boring. No flame shone in me. God gave me the opportunity to travel to the United States for a year. I only went there to learn English and have fun. But one evening, the Holy Spirit called me and said, "Mael, are you sure, you are in the right place?". Back from the USA, I wanted to go to Sweden. But all the doors were closed. I was at rock bottom, not knowing what to do in my life when one day a close friend handed me Helmut Haubeil's book *"Abide in Jesus"*. During the

⁴⁸ Morris Venden, *95 Theses on Righteousness by Faith* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2003), p. 133.

first evening of reading I couldn't stop. The famous voice was back. Evening after evening as I read, the flame finally lit up. The more I read, the more I understood the mistake I was making - the lack of Holy Spirit! After reading the book several times I didn't understand how the change would happen. God knew the answer and without realizing it, my speech, my opinions and my attitude were transformed. All this was only the work of the Holy Spirit reflected in me. And suddenly the doors at a professional level opened in France. For me it was God's work but there always remained in me the disappointment of not going to Sweden. The flame was still there but it didn't shine completely. Helmut Haubeil came to Dammarie, Paris. I went there on Friday evening, Saturday morning and afternoon...but still no answer. How to rekindle the flame?

On Sunday morning the answer arrived. This was the last day. My problem was not being in total submission to God's will. I understood that the calling of the Holy Spirit was constantly being made, but after receiving it, it was also necessary to submit to His will and abandon the self. Without this total submission, God could not act through us as Matthew 6:33 says. I have understood since then that this submission is essential in our relationship with God. Only then can the flame shine. Maël (L. R.)

Let us pray:

"Father, we thank You so much that You want us to surrender to You so that we may be blessed. Enable us to simplify our lives and live in a way that will let You make us new creations. Please help me to daily surrender my life to You without any restrictions and to follow You in all things by Your strength. Amen."

Happiness through the Holy Spirit

“The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is his representative. Through it he infuses spiritual life into the soul...Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God.” Ellen White, RH August 25, 1896, par. 6

Youth and the Holy Spirit

Youth Department from a Conference

The result was absolutely incredible. I am the Youth Secretary of the South Queensland Conference [12,200 members]. A young woman gave me *Steps to Personal Revival*. The content blew me away. I could share a lot of experiences. We were very blessed by this booklet. We forwarded 300 books to the youth leaders at the youth leaders meeting of our conference. The result was absolutely incredible. A.v.R. shortened, #138

14-year-old Overcomes Addiction

My 14-year-old son has begun to pray for the Holy Spirit and he has become a different boy. He has overcome his addictions. He now lives a victorious life. We are so grateful to God as he used this little book *Steps to Personal Revival* in my son's life.

Pastor A., #77

Difficulties Solved - Baptism

Her youngest son had many difficulties with the church. So she prayed especially for him during the 40-days prayer time with a prayer partner. The result was that her son changed his life and started preparing for baptism.

I.G., #16

18-year-old's Life Changed

One of our conference presidents gave his 18-year-old son a booklet. This changed his life. Therefore, the father distributed more than 200 copies to the classmates of his son in High School.

C.H., #133

Arise, shine, for your light has come

Is. 60:1

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *Which challenge is behind the divine invitation to surrender my life?*

2. *What can hinder someone from surrender? What could it be for you?*

3. *Which advantages does a life under divine navigation have?*

4. *What is crucial to keeping my relationship with Christ intact and intimate?*

5. *What is a vital controlling factor in our life?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *That God will show us the things that are possibly hindering our complete surrender.*
 2. *That God will give wisdom and strength to properly use our will and give it the correct priority in our life.*
 3. *That God will give us more insight and that our own will won't be in the way.*
 4. *That God gives us victory over temptations and sin.*

JESUS ABIDING IN YOU

*What effects does “Christ in me” have on my life?
The ultimate achievement: being imbued
with the fullness of God.*

Remain in Christ

“Religion means the abiding of Christ in the heart.”⁴⁹

“It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal.”⁵⁰

Note the following:

- ▶ Through the Holy Spirit, Christ lives in us.
- ▶ We receive the Holy Spirit by faith.
- ▶ This is the beginning of eternal life.

The knowledge that Jesus wants to live in me through the Holy Spirit, and actually does when I am filled with the Holy Spirit, is very valuable to me. This is a wonderful biblical truth.

Jesus not only wants to have intimate fellowship with us by living in us through the Holy Spirit, but He also desires consistency and a deepening of our relationship with God. He says, “*Abide in Me, and I in you*” (John 15:4). This is a wonderful invitation and, at the same time, a command. This means that a consistent Christian life is possible through God’s power.

Jesus emphasizes the term *abide* eleven times in John 15:1–17. He wants us to have a lasting relationship with Him. He connects splendid and incredible promises with this idea. “*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you*” (verse 7).

⁴⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, May 24, 1892, par. 4.

⁵⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 388.

“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full” (verse 11).

Ellen White clarifies Jesus’ appeal to “abide in Me, and I in you”: **“Abiding in Christ means [first] a constant receiving of His Spirit, [and second] a life of unreserved surrender to His service.”**⁵¹ Elsewhere she says, “A connection with the divine agency every moment is essential to our progress. We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit.”⁵² And “He [Jesus] will live through them, giving them the inspiration of His sanctifying Spirit, imparting to the soul a vital transfusion of Himself.”⁵³ We may see David’s prayer as a promise for ourselves: *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”* (Ps 51:10)

Drawing upon God’s power source

Many people do not know how to draw upon God’s power. They live in spiritual poverty, although *“his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness”* (2 Pet 1:3, KJV).

A famous oil field in Texas is called Yates Pool. During the American economic crisis, a man named Yates had a sheep ranch. He was not able to earn enough money with sheep farming to pay his debts. Then men from an oil company came and informed him that they thought they might find an oil deposit on his property. The company proposed doing a trial drilling, and so Yates signed a contract.

At about 1,200 feet deep, the drill found a huge oil deposit. And it all belonged to Mr. Yates! On the day he had purchased the land, he had also received the right to any oil or any other natural resources on it. He didn’t realize that he was a multimillionaire living in poverty. What was the problem? He didn’t know about the existence of the oil.⁵⁴

Do you know what is written in 2 Peter 1:3,4? *“His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness”* (KJV). Let me tell you the rest of the verse in my own words: through an intimate relationship with Jesus, and while in this relationship, praying with the *“exceeding great and precious promises”* (KJV).

⁵¹ Ibid., 676.

⁵² Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2012), October 24 p. 306.

⁵³ Ibid., October 23; p. 305.

⁵⁴ Dr. William R. Bright, *Erfüllt mit dem Heiligen Geist—Wie erfährt man das?* (Neuhausen, 1971), S. 27.

At the moment we, by faith in Christ, become the children of God, we also become God's heirs, and *all* His resources are at our disposal. Everything we need in order to be men and women of God and fruitful witnesses for Christ—including wisdom, love, and strength—is at our disposal. However, many Christians live in spiritual poverty, because they do not know how to make use of the spiritual riches which God has already bestowed on them! Like Mr. Yates before oil was discovered on his property, they live in ignorance of their unlimited possessions.

And what does that mean? “Without this connection, no man can be saved. Without the life of Christ in us, we cannot withstand the storms of temptation. Our eternal safety depends upon our building upon the sure foundation. Multitudes are today building upon foundations that have not been tested. When the rain falls, and the tempest rages, and the floods come, their house will fall, because it is not founded upon the eternal Rock, the chief cornerstone Christ Jesus.”⁵⁵

Pray for the Holy Spirit

There is a unique passage in the Bible in which our Lord Jesus urges us ten times to pray for the Holy Spirit. I know of no other passage in which Jesus calls our attention to something with such tender urgency, except for His invitation to abide in Him. This passage is a lesson on prayer. The passage on praying for the Holy Spirit is in Luke 11:9–13. We not only want to repeat this important statement but also pay particular attention to the following in this chapter: “*And you are complete in Him.*” (Col 2:10)

Ellen White said: “To Jesus ... the Holy Spirit was given [daily] without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling [and daily asks the Lord for the Holy Spirit]. Our Lord Himself has given the command, ‘Be filled with the Spirit’ (Eph 5:18), and this command is also a promise of its fulfillment. It was the good pleasure of the Father that in Christ should ‘all the fullness dwell’ and ‘in Him ye are made full’ (Colossians 1:19, R.V.; 2:10, R.V.).”⁵⁶

Here we learn:

- ▶ The Holy Spirit lived in Jesus without measure.
- ▶ He desires for us to live in complete surrender so that the Holy Spirit can live in us to the same extent.

⁵⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 599, 600.

⁵⁶ Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 21.

- ▶ For this reason, Jesus Himself gave the command: “Be filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18).
- ▶ His object is that we will have life more abundantly here (John 10:10; Col 2:10) and eternal life (John 3:16).
- ▶ Thus, it is necessary to be in Him. Jesus in us has great and valuable consequences.

Praying by faith

We pray by faith “*that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*” (Gal 3:14). “*Without faith it is impossible to please Him*” (Heb 11:6). “*Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith*” (Eph 3:17).

It is necessary to know that after my prayer for the Holy Spirit, I have really received Him. Our wonderful God has shown us how we can easily have faith in Him. It is by praying with promises. (See the booklet *Steps to Personal Revival*, chapter 5, “The Key to Practical Experience,” where the topic is treated more extensively.)

Ellen White even says, “The Spirit awaits our demand and reception.”⁵⁷ David Wolkwitz adds:

Can you imagine “demanding” something from God? In this case, the special gift of the Holy Spirit. Such a thought makes us shudder with fear. It sounds disrespectful and even blasphemous to even think such a thing. And yet, this term is used by the Lord’s messenger in various passages of her writings. What does she mean? First, we should recognize that God is only too happy to give us this gift, because He loves us and we need it so badly. Secondly, it means that this gift is extremely important for us. Since we are told that this gift is waiting for our demand, then it clearly shows us that when we long for the continual presence of Jesus in our lives so that He can lead and guide us, and knowing we are fully surrendered to God, we may then in trust and confidence make our demand. We need to think carefully about this.⁵⁸

Demanding something implies strong interest in something you absolutely need or want to have; it implies seriousness on the part of the person asking. We should lay aside our inhibitions to “demand” something. “He

⁵⁷ Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 121.

⁵⁸ David Wolkwitz, *Der Weg zu einer kraftvollen Erweckung* (The Way to a Powerful Revival) (NRW, Abt. Heimatmission), S. 205.

[God] is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name.”⁵⁹

Surrendering ourselves with our whole heart to Jesus every day, by faith we obtain the great gift of God—the Holy Spirit.

Apostle Paul’s wonderful intercessory prayer

For this topic, we want to look at Ephesians 3:14–21, where we find a wonderful intercessory prayer from Paul for the church in Ephesus. The outline is as follows:

1. He asks for the inward power of the Holy Spirit for them
2. that thereby Christ may dwell in their hearts
3. that you experience the full extent of his love and that this divine love may being rooted and grounded in them
4. that they might be filled with the fullness of God.
5. We see here distinctly God’s way with us: Through being filled with the Holy Spirit lives Christ in us and we experience a positive change of our charakter—the fruit of the Spirit growth.

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, **to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;** that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, **that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.**” (Eph 3:14–19, KJV)

How can I obtain inner strength?

The foundation of our religious life is shown in Ephesians 3:16: *“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”* (KJV)

We need strength every day. A life full of strength brings us joy. Our wonderful Lord wants us to have abundant strength in our lives. This strength for the inner person is provided by the Holy Spirit. The booklet *Steps to Personal Revival*, page 60, shows why it is necessary to consecrate ourselves

⁵⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

daily to Jesus and to pray daily for the Holy Spirit. And by praying with promises we can be sure to receive the Holy Spirit as soon as we ask. Again, I recommend reading this booklet—it's so important.

Christ in us

What comes next, according to verse 17? ***“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith”*** (KJV).

Are we sufficiently aware of this marvelous truth? When we live with the Holy Spirit, then it is a fact that Jesus lives in our hearts. We can neither feel nor measure this. We have to believe it. If you believe this, then speak to Him now and again, and tell Him: “Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You dwell in my heart.” Or, “Lord, I am so glad You live in me.”

Andrew Murray says: “In this way Jesus takes you into fellowship with Him with the objective that His life becomes part of your life.”⁶⁰

Ellen White adds: “The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul.”⁶¹ And “in the plan of restoring in men the divine image, it was provided that the Holy Spirit should move upon human minds, and be as the presence of Christ, a molding agency upon human character.”⁶² And also: “A healthy Christian is one who has Christ formed within, the hope of glory [Col 1:27].”⁶³

The text says that Christ dwells in our hearts **by faith**. Trust is the foundation of faith. It is a matter of entrusting our whole life to Jesus—our first basic surrender of our lives and then, consequently, the daily surrender to Jesus Christ.

What connection do faith and feelings have?

God's Word says: *“That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love.**”* (Eph 3:16,17) We are being filled by the Holy Spirit for the indwelling of Jesus Christ in our hearts, and this should take place *through faith*.

⁶⁰ Andrew Murray, *Bleibe in Jesus* (Remain in Jesus) (Leun, 2012), S. 149.

⁶¹ Francis D. Nichol, ed., *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2001), p. 1112.

⁶² Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, February 8; p. 47.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, February 4; p. 43.

Jesus said, “*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.*” (John 7:38) It is necessary that we always carefully pay attention to this. Why? The core of faith is trust. I trust what Jesus has said. He said of His Father, “*Your word is truth*” (John 17:17). Ellen White said, “Faith plants itself on the promises of God, and claims them as surety that he will do just as he said he would.”⁶⁴

Trusting God means relying on His Word. I trust God’s Word.

How is it when I act according to my feelings? Then I am trusting in something in myself. Roger J. Morneau, whom God saved from Satan’s church, opens our eyes: “The [demonic] spirits would encourage people to listen to their feelings instead of the word of Christ and His prophets. In no surer way could the spirits obtain control of people’s lives without the individuals realizing what was happening.”⁶⁵ We are not searching for an emotional or mystic experience.

Faith means trusting in God and His Word, upholding the Bible as binding for our lives and not merely an ingredient or garnish. Many argue that we cannot obey God’s Word in our own strength. That is true for carnal Christians. But whoever lives with the Holy Spirit has Jesus in their hearts and is equipped to obey God’s Word. Romans 8:4 says: “That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” (More on this subject in Chapter 4: Obedience through Jesus)

Trusting God and experiencing how His promises are fulfilled in our lives will strengthen our faith in Him and gives us deep roots in His love. Ultimately this love of God satisfies the deepest needs of our hearts. It is like a small child in his father’s arms experiencing comfort and safety. The child’s feelings can change since he is still immature. But when the child’s feelings change, this doesn’t automatically change the father’s love. As we mature in God’s love, we realize that our superficial feelings cannot give us any certainty about our relationship with God. Our feelings are unreliable because they are unstable. Our assurance comes from our trust in God and His constant Word.

We don’t need to desperately search for feelings. When Christ lives in us through the Holy Spirit, then the fruit of the Spirit will increasingly develop in us. These are gifts of deeper emotions from the Holy Spirit. Joy has a clear part there. “*The joy of the Lord is your strength.*” (Neh 8:10) In a life of

64 Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, May 22, 1884, par. 3.

65 Roger J. Morneau, *A Trip Into the Supernatural*, (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999), p. 43.

faith, joy will not come up short, but rather will be strong in us through our life with God.

In the future, it will be crucial for us to differentiate between discipleship by trusting God and discipleship by feelings. The great tempter will show us wonderful things, even about Jesus, but behind this revelation is enticement through feelings and mysticism. It will go so far that people will seem to have wonderful “faith experiences” and come to completely rely on their feelings instead of God’s Word. They may even think that they don’t need God’s Word, since they see themselves as spirit-led through their emotional experiences.

Jesus’ words speak clearly against this in Matthew 7:21–23: *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven [according to His Word]. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”* We can only say: Trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, than to trust and obey. (See *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, chap. 21, “Looking Unto Jesus.”)

Why is continual and complete surrender to God so important?

In Romans 12:1, God requests the following through the apostle Paul: *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”* (NIV) And in Proverbs 23:26 is the invitation: *“My son, give me your heart.”*

The meaning of surrender is explained in more detail in chapter 2 “Surrender to Jesus”. It is also explained well in the book “Steps to Christ” in chapter 5 “Consecration”.

Our surrender to God’s love brings a great blessing. If Jesus is allowed to guide our lives, then He can free us from the tyranny of our ego (all the envy, anger, contentiousness, and so on). Ellen White says, “The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ.”⁶⁶ “We shall not gain the victory through numbers, but through the full surrender of the soul to Jesus.”⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 805.

⁶⁷ Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2003), p. 279.

Understanding a revealed secret

Let's proceed to Ephesians 3:18, the first part: "[That you] may be able to comprehend with all the saints." What should we comprehend? Just what the previous verse explained: the secret that Christ lives in us (through the Holy Spirit) and thereby our lives are being changed, because we are rooted and established in the love of God. This means Jesus Christ develops His character in us.

A brother writes: "The truth about 'being in Christ' and 'Jesus in us' is so simple and yet so difficult to comprehend that most Christians have not fully understood it."⁶⁸

Paul says in Colossians 1:25,26: *"I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people."* (NIV) **What secret?** Verse 27 says: *"To whom [the saints] God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."* (KJV)

The mystery hid for ages and now revealed is that Jesus Himself wants to live in us through the Holy Spirit. The text says that this is our hope of glory. This means that the fullness of life that God wants for our present life, and at the same time bestows us with eternal life, is thus guaranteed.

Ellen White expands on this secret, called "Christ in you," the hope for glory (Colossians 1:27), as follows: **"A knowledge of this mystery furnishes a key to every other. It opens to the soul the treasures of the universe, the possibilities of infinite development."**⁶⁹ The Bible often uses expressions such as "Christ in you" and similar terms such as "in Christ," "in Him," "in the Lord," and "in the beloved." These expressions are used 170 times in the New Testament. For example, this expression is the key word in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. Think about his testimony: *"Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"* (Gal 2:20, KJV). In Romans 15:18, he writes: *"For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me."*

Other well-known texts include: *"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."* (2 Cor 2:14, KJV) *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."* (2 Cor 5:17, KJV) The focus here is laid on the change of character by the fruit of the Spirit: *"Created in Christ Jesus unto good works."* (Eph 2:10, KJV) *"The dead in Christ will rise first."* (1 Thess 4:16) *"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby*

⁶⁸ Dennis Smith, *Spirit Baptism and Abiding in Christ* (2010), p. 12.

⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2002), p. 172.

know we that we are in him.” (1 John 2:5, KJV) “God ... sending His own Son ... that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us” (Rom 8:3,4). If we look in a concordance, we find many such valuable texts under the key words “in Christ,” “in the beloved,” “in the Lord,” “in Him” (Christ).

Either “in Christ” or “outside Christ”

E. Stanley Jones has said, “Paul...focuses on the phrase ‘in Christ’ and uses it 97 times in his letters...With great care He realized that these two words divide humankind into two groups, ‘in Christ’ and ‘outside Christ’ ...Who ‘is in Christ’ is ‘in life,’ and who is ‘outside Christ’ is ‘in death.’”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ E. Stanley Jones, *In Christ* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961), p. 9; re-translated from German.

*There is therefore now no
condemnation for those who
are in Christ Jesus who
do not walk according
to the flesh, but according
to the Spirit.*

Romans 8:1 NKJV

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *According to Ellen White, what is true religion?*

2. *What is just as important as letting Jesus into our hearts?*

3. *What role does our faith or trust in God play in relation to our receiving the Holy Spirit?*

4. *Why is it so important that our relationship with Jesus is based on our trust in Him and His Word and not on our feelings?*

5. *When Christ abides in us through the Holy Spirit, then His character develops in us, which is the fruit of the Spirit. What implications does this have for your life?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *For the understanding and possession of true religion—that Jesus lives by faith in our hearts.*
 2. *For steadfastness in surrendering our hearts to Jesus.*
 3. *For a deeper experience of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.*
 4. *For the right prioritization of our feelings and how to deal with them.*
 5. *For joy which continually grows and is more visible—the joy that Christ brings.*

The Effects of “Christ in You”

How do we get deliverance from the power of sin? Will we become “carnal” again by sinning?

Ellen White on “Christ in you”

“When God’s people are one in the unity of the Spirit, all of Phariseeism, all of self-righteousness, which was the sin of the Jewish nation, will be expelled from all hearts. ... God will make known the mystery which hath been hidden for ages. He will make known what are the ‘*riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory*’ (Col 1:27).”⁷¹

Joseph, Daniel and his companions

“You should be prepared to follow the example of these noble youth. Never be ashamed of your colors; put them on, unfurl them to the gaze of men and angels. Do not be controlled by false modesty, by false prudence which suggests to you a course of action contrary to this advice. By your choice words and a consistent course of action, by your propriety, your earnest piety, make a telling confession of your faith, determined that Christ shall occupy the throne in the soul temple; and lay your talents without reserve at His feet to be employed in His service.”⁷²

Family life

Christ in Each Heart Will Bring Unity—“If the will of God is fulfilled, the husband and wife will respect each other and cultivate love and confidence. Anything that would mar the peace and unity of the family should be firmly repressed, and kindness and love should be cherished. He who manifests

⁷¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 386.

⁷² Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2003), p. 28.

the spirit of tenderness, forbearance, and love will find that the same spirit will be reflected upon him. Where the Spirit of God reigns, there will be no talk of unsuitability in the marriage relation. If Christ indeed is formed within, the hope of glory, there will be union and love in the home. Christ abiding in the heart of the wife will be at agreement with Christ abiding in the heart of the husband. They will be striving together for the mansions Christ has gone to prepare for those who love Him.”⁷³

“You want your homes to be like Abraham’s. He commanded his household after him. He taught them to obey the commands of God. These are the lessons, mothers, that you are to patiently teach your children. You cannot afford to spend time in studying the fashions of the day. Teach them that they are Christ’s property. We are making characters today. Young men, young women, you are determining your lot in the future today. **Let Christ come in. He will preserve you from temptation.**”⁷⁴

Overcoming

“*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*’ (2 Corinthians 5:17) Through the power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. This change is in itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word. We cannot understand it; we can only believe, as declared by the Scriptures, it is ‘*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*’ [Col 1:27].”⁷⁵

Jesus’ letters

“In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ’s follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative

⁷³ Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2002), p. 120.

⁷⁴ Ellen G. White, *Temperance* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2004), pp. 290, 291.

⁷⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476.

of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness and be won to love and serve Him.”⁷⁶

The personal side of God’s love

Through this intimate connection, which Christ wants to enter into with us through the Holy Spirit, He shows us in a special way the personal side of God’s great love. It is incomprehensible that Christ lives in me. But His Word assures us of this, which makes it true.

A father was on an overseas trip with his son and wanted to explain God’s love. The father said, “Look out over the bow of the ship, and now the stern—this is the length of God’s love. And now look to the left and to the right—this is the width of God’s love. Now look up into the sky—this is the height of God’s love. Now look over the water. The ocean is deep under us. That is the depth of God’s love.” The youngster reflected a moment on this explanation and then exclaimed with a shining face: “Dad, do you know what the best part of it is? We are in the middle of it.”

Everyone who daily consecrates his or her life to Christ and is filled by the Holy Spirit is in the middle of God’s love. There is no better place we could live. I pray every morning that our wonderful Father will keep me in this place.

The ultimate achievement: life in abundance

In Ephesians 3:19, Paul wants us to understand Jesus’ love for us, and that through this love we are filled with the fullness of God. This verse says: *“And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”* (KJV)

Can we see what depends on Christ living in us? It is the only way to the fullness of God. In John 10:10, Christ says that He came so that we may have life more abundantly. Colossians 2:9,10 says, *“For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him.”* (KJV) Do you have the fullness of God? God wants to give it to you. Take the necessary steps!

⁷⁶ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 115.

Answers beyond our requests

We may pray that the Lord answers our prayers according to His promise in Ephesians 3:20: *“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”* (KJV). We may ask, claiming this promise, that our wonderful Lord not only answers our prayers as we have petitioned, but rather beyond our request, beyond our comprehension, abundantly blesses according to the riches of His glory and power. In addition, we may pray according to Jeremiah 33:3 that God answers our prayer and reveals great and mighty things to us: *“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”* (NIV)

What effects does Jesus’ life have in me?

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” (1 Cor 1:30) Christ is made unto us wisdom. We can act wisely with Christ in us. *“For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.”* (Proverbs 8:11) *“Then I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness.”* (Ecclesiastes 2:13) Without being in Christ, we can be very intelligent. But we can be very foolish at the same time. Let us remember Adam and Eve. They were highly intelligent and acted very foolish as they acted self-determined instead of trusting God. My being ‘in Christ’ determines whether I am intelligent **and** wise. *“Wisdom makes one wise person more powerful than ten rulers in a city.”* (NIV)

Christ is made unto us righteousness. This means that the righteousness lost at the fall of humankind can be regained through Him. A valuable text is Romans 8:3,4: *“God ... sending His own Son ... condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”* Please note that the text says that righteousness is fulfilled through Jesus in those who walk in the Spirit. This is how Christ lives in us.

Dennis Smith writes: “Righteousness by faith has a justifying and sanctifying aspect. Righteousness means that God frees the believer from sin and the penalty and clothes the repentant sinner with Christ’s righteousness (complete obedience).”⁷⁷

77 Dennis Smith, *40 Days: Prayers and Devotions to Revive Your Experience With God*, book 2, p. 18.

Thus the most marvelous trade takes place: Christ takes my guilt and gives me His righteousness. Through this trade we stand before the Father as if we had never sinned. *“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”* (Ps 103:12) By God’s grace we can walk through life free of guilt.

Christ is made unto us sanctification. What does sanctification mean? “True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God.”⁷⁸ The importance of the indwelling of Christ for a life of joyful obedience will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4 “Obedience through Jesus.” Christ is made unto us salvation, that is, forgiveness of all guilt, freedom from the bondage of sin, eternal life in God’s glory. Jesus paid the ransom with His sacrifice.

During the time of slave trafficking in Africa, the prisoners had an iron collar locked around their necks and were then linked to the other prisoners with a chain. Occasionally one of these poor people was ransomed along the way. As soon as the ransom was paid, the prisoner was freed from his iron collar. Jesus has ransomed us—He has paid for us.

Jesus’ mind-set will develop step by step in us. We can claim Philippians 2:5 when we pray: *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”* When we allow Christ in, then He will let His manner of thinking and acting unfold in us. We then love what He loves. We keep away from the things He doesn’t want.

Jesus accomplishes good works through me

God’s Word says in Ephesians 2:10: “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” God has prepared good works for you and me—if we are “in Christ”—so that we can accomplish them. By fulfilling this task our Lord has planned an ingenious way. By working for Him and others in this work, three things come into play:

1. A constant healing of my egoism because I work for others
2. Others receive blessings through me.
3. The Lord sends great blessings back to me.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 565.

⁷⁹ Book 3 in miniserie *Steps to Personal Revival* entitled “*Spirit-Filled Co-Workers of Jesus—How Can I Become That?*” (2019).

We will grow through it in faith; our practical, mental, and spiritual abilities will develop, our joy and strength will increase, and in the process, we are working for God's kingdom. This task will prepare us for God's kingdom.

There is another great question involved: Do I work for God in my human strength or can our Lord work through me with His divine abilities?⁸⁰

He enables me to be His witness

Since Jesus came *"to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luk 19:10), He will naturally lead people to salvation through me. "Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him."⁸¹ *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me."* (Acts 1:8, KJV). We will come back to this topic in chapter 5 "Attractive Faith through Jesus".

God urges us to be *"praying in the Holy Spirit"* (Jude 20). When Christ lives in us through the Holy Spirit, then we can pray in the Holy Spirit as well as in the name of Jesus. Jesus assures us: *"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."* (John 14:13, KJV) We are clearly told: "We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."⁸²

What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus? "To pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning and the ending of a prayer. **It is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.**"⁸³ Thus, praying in the name of Christ has four aspects:

1. Praying in the spirit of Jesus means being filled with the Holy Spirit.
2. Believing in His promises, claiming promises while we pray.
3. Relying on His grace, with faith, in the wonderful mutual-trust relationship with God.
4. Working His works, for example through His Spirit being obedient in all things.

When we remain in Christ, then all these prerequisites are fulfilled by His grace. Thus, praying in the name of Jesus means praying in His power.

⁸⁰ For more particulars, see: www.steps-to-personal-revival.info under "Development."

⁸¹ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 115.

⁸² Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147.

⁸³ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pp. 100, 101.

He promised to answer our prayers. This shows that Jesus has immense confidence in those who abide in Him. We may take advantage of all the promises through Christ in us.⁸⁴ *“For all the promises of God in Him are yes, and in Him Amen.”* (2 Cor 1:20) *“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue [this means an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ]: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”* (2 Pet 1:3,4, KJV) Note God’s wonderful way: He has already given us what we need to live and for a godly way of life. We receive these gifts through an intimate relationship with Christ. These things are bestowed on us in this relationship through claiming promises in prayer, that is, through prayers of faith so that we will partake of the divine nature.

Deliverance from the power of sin

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life [that is the live-giving power of the Holy Spirit] in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom 8:1,2)

Why is there no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus? First, because Christ has taken my guilt of sin upon Himself. Second, when He is in us, the bondage of sin over us is broken; we are freed from the law of sin. This means that we no longer have to sin, but we still can sin. Galatians 5:16 says something important about deliverance from the power of sin: *“Walk in the Spirit [meaning: live constantly with the Holy Spirit], and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”*

The next verses in Galatians 5, verses 17 and 18, explain that this has to do with life with the Holy Spirit. Verses 19–21 list the works of the flesh, which we no longer have to do when we live with the Holy Spirit. Christ in us protects us from sin and the work of fallen angels, as 1 John 5:18 affirms: *“We know that those who are children of God do not keep on sinning. The Son of God keeps them safe. The evil one can’t harm them.”* (NIRV) Christ fills our hearts with the Holy Spirit so that evil has no room. However, at this point, we must also keep in mind that *“the inward man is being renewed day by day”* (2 Cor 4:16).

⁸⁴ Claiming promises in prayer is dealt with in more detail in *Steps to Personal Revival* by H. Haubeil, Chapter 5: The Key to Practical Experience

Christ in us encourages us not to sin

In 1 John 3:6–9, we read the following solemn words regarding sin: *“No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.”* (ESV)

Experts in ancient Greek tell us that these pointed words about sinning refer to habitual sinning. According to the original Greek text, it says, “he doesn’t sin continuously, i.e., habitually (but occasionally he can fall into sin). As God’s children we do what is right and we keep God’s commandments.”⁸⁵ This means that with Christ in us and with us, we are able to give up our sinful habits. Our life with “Christ in us” helps us have victory over besetting sins.

Will we become “carnal” again by sinning?

Let’s bear in mind that through this wonderful change we don’t achieve a sinless state. We can fall into sin through weakness, rashness, or foolishness. If such a situation occurs, then we need to “breathe spiritually”. This means confessing our sin, accepting forgiveness, and again asking to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As long as we “breathe spiritually”, we will remain spiritual Christians and not become carnal again. Sin does not cut off our spiritual relationship to God; however, it is a disturbance that we have to confront.

We will become carnal again if we allow unbelief to take root and we quit “breathing spiritually”. Our sinful nature remains with us until the second coming of Christ. No apostle ever claimed to be sinless. However, “Christ in us” makes a decisive change in our relation to sin.

The practical result

The apostle John writes: *“These things write I to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”* (1 John 2:1) God desires us to lead a sinless life in Christ, but if we

85 Werner E. Lange, Hrgb., *Unser größtes Bedürfnis* (Lüneburg: 2011), S. 31.

do sin, then we may ask our Advocate for forgiveness and receive it. Ellen White says, “Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power.”⁸⁶

Through Christ living in us through the Holy Spirit, the power of sin over us is broken and it will decidedly reduce the frequency with which we sin.

Good health

Christ in us will cause us to care for our health: “*Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.*” (3 John 2, KJV) “*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*” (1 Thes 5:23,24, KJV)

In a lecture given by the geneticist Dr. Sang Lee, he emphasized that through a trusting relationship with Christ our genes work well and produce a health hormone.

The connection between faith and health is the message that the world urgently needs. This message can only be carried by Jesus’ disciples, who daily consecrate themselves with all they are and have, who daily ask for and receive the Holy Spirit, and who personally live according to the health reform advice.

Studies done on 35,000 people in a period of over thirty years under the supervision of Professor Grossarth-Maticek showed that the strongest factor in good health is a loving, spontaneous relationship with God. When this relationship exists, then other health factors, such as a healthy diet, exercise, and well-being, are many times stronger.⁸⁷ This clearly shows the meaning of the following Bible verse: “*For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.*” (1 Tim 4:8) In book 3 of his *40 Days series, 40 Days: God’s Health Principles for His Last-Day People*, Dennis Smith shows quite a different approach to health than what we are commonly acquainted with. He shares how the power of the Holy Spirit motivates and works to change lifestyles. Hence, emotional health has great importance.

⁸⁶ Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, January 5; p. 13.

⁸⁷ According *Medical Wellness mit Newstart—Plus*, by Drs. Heide (Leipzig; 2014), pp. 333, 334.

Smith relates: “These 40-day devotions will show us how we can collaborate with God in order to obtain complete physical, emotional, and spiritual renewal, which he wants us to experience.”⁸⁸

A businessman wrote: “I accepted the health message through daily being filled with the Holy Spirit. Before this, not a single health seminar ever had an effect on me. I loved meat and wasn’t too particular about what kind I ate; I also drank coffee and black tea. I didn’t think this was a problem. Occasionally I also drank a beer. Since 2009 I have been praying daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit. He convinced me to abstain from the consumption of meat, coffee, black tea, and beer. I became a vegetarian. I have come to realize that a life with the Holy Spirit is the foundation for victory in all things, including temperance and lifestyle.”⁸⁹

A sister wrote under the heading “Complete surrender changed my life” (we are sharing only the health aspects here): “I daily invite the Holy Spirit to live and work in my heart. ... I don’t eat constantly anymore. That was impossible for me in my own power. I can meet the daily demands much more peacefully and the stress doesn’t make my stomach turn to knots. God also gave me the strength to stop drinking coffee. Previously, this would have been unthinkable, because when I quit drinking coffee I had horrible headaches for five days. These are severe withdrawal symptoms. This time I didn’t even think about what the consequences would be for me. I only knew that I didn’t want to do it anymore. Today, I have no more desire for it. I had a similar experience with meat. My family and I never wanted to abstain from eating meat. Today it is easy for me—I have no more desire for it.”⁹⁰ One of our leading health experts wrote: “The real need of our time is not simply health education—we have excellent information. What is needed, is health information in connection with the power to put it into practice. It’s all about the power to change.”⁹¹

The gospel gives us the power to change, because of Christ in us through the Holy Spirit.

88 Dennis Smith, *40 Days: God’s Health Principles for His Last-Day People*, book 3 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2012), Day 1.

89 E-mails from a businessman on March 3 and March 21, 2013, shortened and adapted.

90 The complete testimony can be read in German at www.missionsbrief.de – Archiv – Missionsbrief Nr. 42, S. 17, Völlige HIngabe veränderte mein Leben.

91 Don Macintosh, Director Newstart Global, Weimar, USA, in *D’Sozo*, (Remnant USA), Foreword.

The great change in the life of Hudson Taylor

When Hudson Taylor was in charge of the China-Inland Mission, he received a letter from his missionary colleague McCarthy. God used this letter to open his eyes to the wonderful truth of our abiding in Christ and His abiding in us. It revealed the truth about the secret of the union between the believer and Christ. From this day on, Taylor's path with God was a path of peace, rest, and victory. His missionary colleagues noticed this amazing change. They commented on how Taylor was taking a new path as a new man in a new world to share his testimony of what the Lord had done for him.

Taylor wrote a letter to his sister in England. He tried to explain this wonderful truth he had discovered and the wonderful experience he had with his God. He wrote: "My work has never been as extensive, as full of responsibility and as difficult as now, but now the pressure and strain have completely disappeared. The past month was probably the happiest month in my life. I'm longing to tell you a little of what the Lord has done for me. I don't know if I am capable of making it clear, because there isn't really anything new or strange or marvelous and yet everything is new! In a nutshell: 'Where I was blind I can now see!' When my burden was biggest, God used a sentence in a letter from McCarthy to make the scales fall from my eyes. The Spirit of God revealed to me the truth about our oneness with Jesus as I had never known before."

Taylor went on in his letter to describe how the Lord had opened his understanding for the words of Christ—that He is the Vine and the believers are the branches. He wrote: "Oh the joy of seeing this truth!" Then he continued: "The sweetest part—if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the rest which full identification [consensus and surrender] with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realize this; for He, I know, is able to carry out His will, and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places me, or how. It is more necessary that He considers this than me. For in the easiest positions He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult His grace is sufficient."

Dennis Smith says the following about Taylor's experience: "Hudson Taylor found the secret of victory on his path with God. He discovered how he could have great peace in every situation in his service for Christ. God offers the same victory and the same peace to all of His children. Are you longing for such victory and peace? It is my prayer that everybody ...

finds precisely this victory and peace in Christ—a joy that seemed unattainable before.”⁹²

I join in this appeal and wish everyone in whom Christ is dwelling through the Holy Spirit an overflowing and fruitful life for Christ, which is characterized by the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. *“He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.”* (John 15:5, KJV)

Jesus says about Himself: *“The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.”* (John 14:10, KJV) Jesus has a great desire that you and I can say, Jesus Christ, who lives in me, accomplishes His works. “Christ in the heart, Christ in the life, this is our safety.”⁹³

Prayer: *“Lord Jesus, I marvel at the fact that you want to enter my life. When I give my life to you, you fill me with the Holy Spirit. I want to praise you and thank you that through God’s grace you have become wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption for me (1 Cor. 1:30). Please give me joyful and visible growth through fellowship with You through the Holy Spirit. Amen.”*

⁹² Dennis Smith, *Spirit Baptism and Abiding in Christ*, p. 10, 11. Recommended further reading: Dennis Smith, *40 Days: Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming*, book 1 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2009), especially Day 4: “Christ in You,” p. 18, as well as the fourth part of the book, *Spirit Baptism and Abiding in Christ*, pp. 81–102.

⁹³ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 511.

God is waiting for us to long for the Holy Spirit

“The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace.” DA 672.1 #13

Couples and the Holy Spirit

Greater Closeness as a Married Couple

My husband and I were so blessed when we read *Steps to Personal Revival*. We are reading it together for the 3rd time! It puts our life experiences into words and shows solutions for complicated life situations. Reading and praying together has led us to such closeness and unity as we have never experienced before! It's so wonderful to be a team! Working, praying, educating and serving others is such a pleasure! Where can we buy a box of these books? A.C. reduced, #119

Wonderful Experiences

The book *40 Days* gave us wonderful experiences. First of all came personal revival. Through studying together and the exchange of thoughts in the morning, we grew closer together spiritually as a couple. After praying together we experienced God's leading hand daily - even in mundane situations. It is indescribable how much strength we received to get through each day. C.a.K.R. (abbreviated), #3

I Fought in my Married Life

I praise God for having opened my eyes spiritually since reading *Steps to Personal Revival*. I am not the same Christian anymore. As an Adventist, I thought I was an experienced Christian, but deep inside I realized something was missing. I fought in my married life for a good relationship with my husband, who is also a church member. Now we pray together and encourage each other to visit the church. #120

This Book Also Helps Couples

I went to the Adventist bookstore. There I was offered the book, *Steps to Personal Revival*. I did not want to have it. The saleswoman pushed me and said, “This book also helps couples. My niece broke up with her husband. This book brought them together again. Now they are praying together and going to church together.” So I bought the book and have experience it as a precious treasure. #120 a

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *What are the various results of being one with Christ?*

2. *What does it mean to pray in Jesus' Spirit?*

3. *What does Christ achieve in us in regard to sin?*

4. *Do we reach a state of sinlessness through Christ?*

5. *What is the connection between faith and health?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *That "Christ in us" will have clearly visible consequences in our daily life.*
 2. *For the understanding and ability to pray in Jesus' Spirit.*
 3. *For the liberating experience of overcoming sinful habits.*
 4. *That He will safeguard us from spiritual pride and not being sober.*

OBEDIENCE THROUGH JESUS

How can I live in joyful obedience?

Why is it a joy?

Why is obedience for my own good?

How does obedience through Jesus in me work?

*Is obedience by faith a collaboration
between God and man?*

What does God? What does man?

The Bible and a railway timetable

During a conference in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, theology students asked the aged China missionary Hudson Taylor, “How can you believe every word in the Bible?”

His answer was, “When you want to travel home tomorrow, you will open the railway timetable and check the departure times. And if you find that a train leaves at 7:00 a.m., then you won’t ask any further questions, but go to the railway station the following day and find your train ready for departure. Just as you use the railway timetable, I have done the same with the Bible and its commandments and promises for the past 50 years. I have experienced its instructions to always be true in my long life and amongst hundreds of deadly perils. For example, when the Bible says: *‘But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.’* (Matt 6:33) I followed these directives and have never been disappointed in any critical situations. If you do the same, then you will have similar experiences.”⁹⁴

Reflecting on obedience through Christ will give us great joy. We want to do that now. This obedience has a special name: obedience of faith.

⁹⁴ Report by Prof. Dr. Karl Heim in a devotional, which I currently do not have on hand.

To what end does God call ministers?

In Romans 1:5, I found a directive of great importance for me as a minister of the gospel: *“Through whom [Jesus Christ] we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations.”* (ESV)

This means that God calls people to His ministry in order to lead others to obedience of faith. This requires that I understand this matter well, and that with God’s help I am a good example. When I do this, then I am acting in His name, which means in the authority of Jesus Christ.

How does obedience of faith come about?

The closing words of the epistle to the Romans adds another thought: how God wants to achieve this obedience of faith. *“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the **obedience of faith**: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.”* (Rom 16:25–27, KJV)

These verses explain that a mystery was revealed for a definite purpose—to raise obedience of faith, although they don’t explain what the mystery is. We find the explanation in Colossians 1:27: *“To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”*

The mystery is: Christ in us. And what is the result when obedience of faith is achieved in Christ? *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”* (2 Cor 5:17) We have a new life with Christ in us. Another verse describes this new life as follows: *“That you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”* (Eph 3:19)

How do we perceive a life in obedience of faith?

Our attitude changes toward His commandments. *“His commandments are not grievous.”* (1 John 5:3, KJV) *“For My yoke is easy,”* Jesus said (Matt 11:30). *“I will delight myself in Your commandments”* (Ps 119:47), because they are *“better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver”* (verse 72), *“sweeter*

than honey to my mouth” (verse 103), and “I rejoice at Your word” (verse 162). It gives me “great peace” (verse 165). Obedience of faith is a pleasant thing.

We need a firm foundation for our life

The German poet Matthias Claudius writes: “Man needs a firm anchor, something that does not depend on him, but rather something he can depend on.”⁹⁵ Nowadays many people suffer under emotional distress, since they have no firm foundation due to a lack of faith. Through an intimate relationship with Him, God wants to give us a firm foundation based on His Word.

This Christian poet shows us that we need a firm foundation and reliable standards in our lives. Where can we find a firm foundation? God laid this foundation a long time ago. His name is Jesus Christ. “*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*” (1 Cor 3:11, KJV) Jesus is the only One who can provide a firm foundation for our life.

Where can we find the best standards for our life?

Who is even qualified to set standards? Who can determine what is right? The Bible offers a clear answer in Psalm 99:4: “*You have determined what is right.*” (German Luther-Version) And Psalm 111:7,8 adds: “*The works of His hands are verity and justice; all His precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.*” (cf. Ps 148:6)

God, the Creator, has determined what is right. Nobody except God is entitled to set standards or rules. The Creator alone, the great Owner of all things, has this right. Nobody else has a clear overview; God alone is omniscient and all-wise.

The character of the One who sets the standards is of great importance. The Bible shows us that God is love; He is the Source of love and truth, joy and justice. Because of His wonderful character, His infinite ability and omniscience, God was able to optimally lay rules for angels, inhabitants of other worlds, humankind, and animals. The loving Creator created the most favorable conditions for life.

He not only did this with the laws of nature, in, for example, the constants on this earth—the distance from the sun and moon, the orientation of the earth’s axis, and so on—but also laid out laws for the happiness of

⁹⁵ Matthias Claudius (Edition Steinkopf, 1982), S. 10.

humanity in ethics and morals (cf. Jer 7:23). Our loving heavenly Father established wonderful regulations for us.

We want to keep this thought in mind while we discuss a strange phenomenon in the end times—the great confusion concerning obedience to God’s laws.

Confusion regarding obedience to God’s principles

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:3,4, *“If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”* (KJV).

Satan blinds and disguises. A blinded mind can imply two things: first, that certain things aren’t even seen, so that certain things are disguised or hidden. Second, it can mean a mind that is “charmed”, that sees wrong points of view as right. We don’t realize how cleverly these ideas are foisted on us. This disguising and blinding prevents the right view.

The text says that this happens to non-believers. But we make the shocking discovery that the same thing happens to carnal Christians. They profess Jesus but have not completely surrendered themselves to Him. That’s why the “god of this world” can blind them.

I am convinced that Satan attempts this blinding with spiritual Christians as well. Jesus says in Matthew 24:24: *“If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”* (KJV) 1. John 5:18 says according to the German Luther Version: *“... he who is born of God preserves him and the evil does not touch him.”* “Not only is Satan leading the world captive, but his deceptions are leavening the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁹⁶ Jesus clearly describes this phenomenon in His message to the Laodiceans in Revelation 3:17.

In His discourse on last-day events in Matthew 24 and 25, four times Jesus mentions one particular sign of the end: deception. Deception is already very strong, but it will still increase. Who is being blinded, does hardly notice it. I think every one of us should check himself. We should realize that only the Holy Spirit can open our eyes to discern truth and deception. One area of great deception is in relation to obedience to God’s will, toward God’s Word, and toward God’s laws. Many have no clear idea what kind of

96 Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 414.

obedience God wants and how it is possible for us to be obedient. This is the obedience of faith—a special kind of obedience.

What is obedience of faith?

We face several possibilities for defining this term that the apostle Paul coined. It is definitely an obedience that exactly follows God's plan for redemption. It has to do with entering a real trust relationship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. The result is my salvation through Christ's sacrifice. My surrender to Jesus includes keeping the commandments through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not obedience through my own efforts.

Paul took a deliberate stand against pharisaical law obedience, which meant earning one's way into God's kingdom by precisely observing God's commands. He makes it clear that obedience is necessary for true discipleship, but this obedience differs from that of the Pharisees. It begins with a joyful acceptance of salvation through Jesus Christ. It produces acts of obedience in one's life as a disciple of Jesus.

This obedience is based on trust, which comes from the heart. Dennis Smith writes: "When someone lives in a close relationship with God through the Holy Spirit, then obedience comes naturally and from the heart, without giving it great thought."⁹⁷ It is an obedience that is made possible by a divine-human cooperation.

God has revealed a mystery

To summarize Romans 16:25,27: By the eternal God's command a mystery was revealed, to establish obedience of faith. By order of God, this mystery of Christ in us achieves obedience of faith. Obedience of faith is thus a voluntary obedience based on faith, trust, and love. We enter a relationship of trust with God and based on this trust and on our understanding that His laws are in our best interest, we decide to be obedient.

"Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience."⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Dennis Smith, *40 Days: Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming*, book 1, pp. 21, 22.

⁹⁸ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pp. 60, 61.

What does this mystery consist of?

Paul shows us in Colossians 1:25–27 that he was “*made a minister, according to the dispensation of God ... to fulfil the word of God; even **the mystery which hath been hid from ages ... but now is made manifest to his saints.***” (KJV) What kind of mystery is this? “*God would make known [to His saints] **what is the riches of the glory of this mystery ... which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.***” (KJV)

This mystery, which was hidden and is now revealed, is that Jesus Himself wants to live in us through the Holy Spirit. The text says that this is the hope of glory for us, and it means that the fullness of life that God wants to give us now and eternal life in glory can be achieved and guaranteed. This intimate relationship, which Christ wants with us through the Holy Spirit, shows God’s great love in a completely different way. “Christ in us” is the heart of this mystery; in the broadest sense it is the gospel or the plan of redemption.

Romans 16:25,26 tells us that through this mystery, obedience of faith is established or accomplished. This means that through Christ we are able to obey, and we also want to.

How is Christ in us?

How is it possible that Christ can live in us? We read in Ephesians 3:16,17,19: “*That He [the Father] would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love ... may be filled with all the fullness of God.***”

We are told:

1. Through the Holy Spirit we receive abundant power for our inner being.
2. Through the Holy Spirit, Christ lives in us by faith.
3. Thus, we will be rooted and grounded in love. When Jesus Christ lives in us, then He develops His character of love in us. The Bible also calls this “the fruit of the Spirit” (Gal 5:22).
4. This leads us to a life “filled with all the fullness of God” (see also John 10:10; Col 1:9,10).

Christ in us means that our obedience is now possible, because it is brought forth in us by Jesus. Ellen White says: “When a soul receives Christ, he receives power to live the life of Christ.”⁹⁹

99 Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 314.

Jesus lives in us when we completely trust Him, that is, when we have completely committed ourselves to Him. The resulting obedience is obedience of faith. Christ wants to live His victorious life in us.

A further valuable thought is found in Galatians 4:19. Paul says there: *“My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.”* Paul is very anxious for Christ to live in the believers. He said, “until Christ is formed in you.” How long does it take for a person to be fully developed? It takes at least sixteen or seventeen years. I believe that Paul was referring to a growth process here. When we daily dedicate our lives to Christ and daily ask in faith for the Holy Spirit, then Christ is in us, but there is a growth process in this relationship.

Ambiguities

Unfortunately, several points are unclear regarding obedience. First, we want to look at what essential points Jesus mentioned regarding our life of faith: *“Without Me you can do nothing.”* (John 15:5) This also applies to the important area of obedience.

Second, let’s look at a relevant statement from Ellen G. White that explains basic principles regarding obedience: “He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of his good pleasure.”¹⁰⁰

Three important points are made:

1. It is impossible to reach heaven by my own works. This means that wanting to earn something from God (as in righteousness by works) is an error.
2. However, obedience is an indispensable part of a life with God, since Jesus’ disciples are called to live in conformity with God’s will.
3. Obedience should not be our own work, not from our own strength, but rather to will and to do should be accomplished by Christ in us.

Now, we want to look more closely at how this is achieved. There are many who believe that they have to earn heaven either partially or completely. They think they have to follow this wrong course because they do not know the marvelous way God has provided for them. They try to achieve something that is impossible. Everyone who does not have Jesus

100 Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, July 1, 1890, par. 11.

living in them through the Holy Spirit is trying an impossibility, no matter how long or how short their list of obedience points is.

Scripture teaches that we cannot be saved by our own merits (works by the law), but rather only by faith in God. Romans 3:28 says: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.” “There is not a point that needs to be dwelt upon more earnestly, repeated more frequently, or established more firmly in the minds of all than the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best good works. Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone.”¹⁰¹

Obedience is indispensable

Jesus emphasizes obedience. His last words were: “[*Teach*] them to observe all things that I have commanded you.” (Matt 28:20) Here He is clearly talking about obedience. The commandments, which Jesus Christ wrote with His own hand and gave to Moses at Sinai, require our obedience. This expectation from God, which the Bible testifies to, is summarized as follows: “All His gifts are promised on condition of obedience.”¹⁰²

In *Christ’s Object Lessons*, we also read: “The character of God is expressed in His law; and in order for you to be in harmony with God, the principles of His law must be the spring of your every action.”

“Christ does not lessen the claims of the law. In unmistakable language He presents obedience to it as the condition of eternal life.”¹⁰³

The apostle John shows us that obedience indicates whether we know God or not: “*And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*” (1 John 2:3,4, KJV) “*And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him.*” (1 John 3:24, KJV)

Obedience is also an indicator that shows if we love God: “*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.*” (1 John 5:3)

The Bible shows us that obedience is a sign of the remnant, the end-time church, speaking of those “*who keep the commandments of God*”

101 Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999), p. 18.

102 Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 145.

103 *Ibid.*, p. 391.

(Rev 12:17). *“Here are those who keep the commandments of God.”* (Rev 14:12)

Charles Finney, probably the most successful revivalist preacher of our time, said: “Revival is a new beginning of obedience to God.”¹⁰⁴ We also want to quote the *Adult Bible Study Guide* from August 31, 2011: “Obedience is not a means to salvation, but rather is a means which reveals the consequences and blessings of salvation in the life of the redeemed.”

Obedience in and through Christ

We can only be obedient through Christ living in us. He alone can achieve this. As a human being, Christ was a model of obedience for us. *“Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.”* (Heb 5:8) *“And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”* (verse 9)

Acts 5:32 confirms this: God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. Does this mean that our obedience to God’s commandments is a condition for our redemption? Not at all! Instead, Paul wants to again emphasize that the path to redemption is by faith alone and on this path we are to be obedient to God. Then He will work through His Spirit in a wondrous way, so that we willingly live as God wants us to.

This is exactly what Paul writes in Roman 8:3,4: *“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”* God said, “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” (Eze 36:27)

Living continuously in the Holy Spirit

To “walk after the Spirit” means to live continuously in the Holy Spirit. This text shows that the necessary obedience is fulfilled through Christ in us, namely in those in whom the Holy Spirit resides. God sent His Son so that the righteousness required by the law could be fulfilled by Him in us. Please note that the text does not say that righteousness is fulfilled through us, but rather in us.

¹⁰⁴ Cited in *Unser größtes Bedürfnis* (Our Greatest Need), Lüneburg: Werner E. Lange, 2011, S. 102.

What does Paul say in Galatians 2:20 about his life? *“I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”* (KJV) Paul makes it clear that Christ is leading his life. In Ezekiel 36:27, God tells us, *“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”*

Is it clear what this text means? God wants to imbue us with His Spirit and thus He will make us into people who keep His commandments. This means that God will take care of our obedience through the Holy Spirit.

Here we see clearly that obedience takes place through the Holy Spirit and Christ in us. It is a heartfelt obedience. Without this fellowship we can only produce insufficient outward obedience. “It is true that there may be an outward correctness of deportment without the renewing power of Christ. The love of influence and the desire for the esteem of others may produce a well-ordered life. Self-respect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart may perform generous actions.”¹⁰⁵ It may be that we want to keep God’s commands out of a sense of duty or because it is expected from us. “The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely—because he is required to do so—will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within.”¹⁰⁶

How can Christ live in us?

A relationship with Jesus begins with complete surrender to Him. He answers this with our spiritual rebirth (see John 3:1–21). This new life of ours, given by God, is maintained by a daily renewal of our relationship with Christ. It takes our daily consecration as well as our daily request to be filled with the Holy Spirit—being refreshed by the Spirit. In this way Jesus lives in us. *“To be strengthened with might through His Spirit ... that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”* (Eph 3:16,17)

¹⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 58.

¹⁰⁶ Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 97.

Examine yourselves, whether Christ lives in you

Scripture invites us to examine whether Christ lives in us. *“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.”* (2 Cor 13:5)

God wants us to know our spiritual state. When are we disqualified or unfit? Since we become qualified through Christ in us, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, then being unfit would be a life that lacks being filled by the Holy Spirit. The Bible calls this a carnal mind.

When is our car “unfit”? When it doesn’t run any longer. If it has no fuel, what can we do? We can either try to push it or purchase fuel. Of course, we will fill the car with fuel. Without Jesus in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, our obedience resembles someone trying to push a car with no fuel.

Is it becoming more apparent to you how important Jesus is for our faith and life? Jesus is irreplaceable. *“He who has the Son has life.”* (1 John 5:12) *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* (John 14:6) We need Jesus. Without Him we cannot be saved. We will have neither a fulfilled life here nor life in eternity.

Do you better understand how obedience is accomplished? We show our willingness to Jesus through our daily surrender and request for the Holy Spirit that He can accomplish obedience in us. We understand this well when we read 1 Corinthians 1:30: *“But of Him [God] you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”* All this Christ wants and can accomplish in us. And when the Bible says that Christ became sanctification for us, then it clearly means that it happened so that we can live in obedience.

When are we saved?

Why is the answer to this question so important? When I am already saved, then it is clear that my obedience comes as a result of my salvation. It is not a prerequisite for my salvation. I am saved at the moment of my complete surrender to Jesus Christ. *“For by grace **you have been saved** through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”* (Eph 2:8,9)

When the apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he informed them that they were already saved. However, in Romans 8:24, he writes, *“**For we are saved by hope.**”* (KJV) We have the freedom to stay with God or not.

After our salvation (by hope) our main concern is to abide in Christ until the end of our lives or until His second coming. We were saved by faith (Eph 2:8), and after that, it is necessary to stay in this faith. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” (Col 2:6) The point is to remain in Christ through surrender. Dennis Smith writes the following about abiding in Christ: “Abiding in Him is not a work that we have to do as a prerequisite for our salvation. Rather it is our consent to letting Him do everything for us, in us and through us.”¹⁰⁷

Why is our complete surrender necessary? What is it good for?

Complete surrender has to do with our deliverance from the tyranny of our egos. Our ego is the cause of our problems. A proverb says: Every person’s greatest problem is themselves. Our ego gets offended, hurt, and upset; wants to assert its authority; is jealous, and so forth.

“God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him. ... He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God.”¹⁰⁸

Life under the reign of our ego is a life of slavery to sin. Life with Christ in us is a life of glorious freedom for the children of God. A potter can only form the clay that is in his hands. Our surrender is of absolute importance.

After our surrender comes abiding in Christ. And when we remain in Him, then salvation will continue through all eternity. However, it will enter a completely new dimension after Jesus’ second coming.

Biblical obedience

Biblical obedience doesn’t have to do with either merits or with righteousness by works. It is a logical result of my trust in God, my surrender, my salvation, and my relationship to Christ. Biblical obedience in a reborn Christian, one who is filled by the Holy Spirit, is nothing other than love to God

¹⁰⁷ Dennis Smith, *40 Days: Prayers and Devotions to Revive Your Experience With God*, book 2 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011), p. 35.

¹⁰⁸ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pp. 43, 44.

expressed in deeds. Obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit gives joy and delight:

“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service.”¹⁰⁹

It should be clear to us that we cannot be obedient by our own efforts. The Lord tells us about the people of Israel: “They had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God’s law.”¹¹⁰

We cannot observe God’s commandments in our own power. The secret of obedience is Jesus in us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. If we really love and trust Jesus, if He lives in us through the Holy Spirit, then obedience brings great joy. When Jesus lives in us, then He ensures that we have His law in our hearts. This law is the law of liberty, the Ten Commandments (Jas 2:12).

¹⁰⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

¹¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2005), p. 371.

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *What is faithful obedience and how is it perceived?*

2. *How and when am I saved? Is this salvation irrevocable?*

3. *What is the natural consequence of biblical faith concerning the things we do or don't do?*

4. *Does God expect something from us? What role do works play in connection with salvation?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *For a deeper understanding of salvation and obedience.*
 2. *For the joy that stems from our relationship with God.*
 3. *For the biblical assurance of salvation.*
 4. *For the love for God that is expressed in actions.*
 5. *For the right understanding of God's love and holiness.*

*How does obedience through
“Jesus in me” work?
God has designed:
Collaboration between God and Man*

A miracle of obedience at the wedding

We all know the story of the wedding at Cana, where Jesus performed His first miracle. He turned water into wine, unfermented wine, which we would call grape juice. What happened there?

Mary, the mother of Jesus, heard that there was no more wine and informed Jesus. But Jesus did not react as she expected. Nonetheless, she assumed that Jesus would somehow help in this situation, because she said to the servants: *“Whatsoever he [Jesus] saith unto you, do it.”* (John 2:5, KJV) Thus, Mary built up the confidence of the servants in Jesus.

When Jesus finally said: “Fill the water pots with water,” they decided to do exactly that. Then He said: *“Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast,”* and they did it (verses 7,8, KJV).

We want to emphasize the following: Since the servants had gained confidence in Jesus, they decided to obey His orders willingly. In other words, their willingness and decision were discernible steps to obedience—by doing what Jesus requested. Through their obedience, Jesus turned water into a delicious drink. He performed His first miracle.

What were the individual steps?

- ▶ By her instruction, Mary built up the servants’ trust in Jesus.
- ▶ The servants expressed their trust and willingness by doing what Jesus said.
- ▶ Neither Mary nor the servants had a part in actually turning water into wine. Jesus alone performed this miracle.

But would this miracle have happened without these preparatory steps? It is important that we trust Jesus, that we place our will and choices at His disposal and express this with steps to obedience. By doing so, Jesus—and Jesus alone—will perform this miracle. He alone also performs the miracle of obedience in us. This is how obedience of faith works. Jesus has been made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for us (1 Cor 1:30). Our decision to accept His will and our preparatory steps to obedience are the door-openers for the miracle of obedience, which Jesus performs in our lives.

Collaboration between God and man

Ellen White explains how the steps to obedience worked in the life of Daniel: While God was working in Daniel and his companions “to will and to do of His good pleasure,” they were working out their own salvation (Philippians 2:13). Herein is revealed the outworking of the divine principle of co-operation, without which no true success can be attained. Human effort avails nothing without divine power; and without human endeavor, divine effort is with many of no avail. To make God’s grace our own, we must act our part. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. ...

... And by the impartation of His Spirit He will strengthen every true purpose, every noble resolution. Those who walk in the path of obedience will encounter many hindrances. ... In His strength they may overcome every temptation, conquer every difficulty.¹¹¹

“The Lord designs that divine power shall cooperate with human effort.”¹¹² Mark Finley wrote, “Working together with God brings great joy and fulfillment.”

What part do we play? What part does Jesus have in us?

1. We decide to develop our trust in Jesus, who works in us to will and to do. He creates in us an atmosphere of willingness, and we will know what we have to do. But He waits for our decision.
2. It is our job to decide to do God’s will. Since God completely respects our personality and will, He can and will only intervene after we have made our decision. He waits for it.
3. It is our job to make visible our decision to trust in Jesus and to express it in our steps of obedience. These steps of obedience can differ greatly in magnitude.
4. God does the crucial part alone, and He also supports us with our developing trust and preparation. But we shouldn’t forget that there is a big difference between trying to make the decision and steps of obedience in our own strength or if we do them in God’s strength. Our part is done in God’s strength, when Jesus lives in us through the Holy Spirit. This makes obedience a joy, whether in small things or great things.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 486, 487.

¹¹² Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, January 2, p. 10.

¹¹³ Mark Finley, *Decisions: Persuading People for Christ* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1984).

Questions

There are differing opinions about who makes obedience possible. Some hold the view that obedience is the result of divine-human collaboration. Others say that God or Christ does it alone. So how does it work?

At the time of Jesus many people believed that it was enough to know the truth. In *The Desires of Ages*, we read: “The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ’s day was that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness.”¹¹⁴

God does not expect us to passively endure His will, but rather He expects us to react to it, to be reactive. This means that with Christ in our hearts we make a positive decision and practically implement it. “He [man] is elected to put on the armor, to fight the good fight of faith. He is elected to use the means God has placed within his reach. ... He is elected to have faith continually.”¹¹⁵ “Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation. ... From first to last man is to be a laborer together with God. ... Cooperation with Christ means a victory. ...

“Never leave the impression on the mind that there is little or nothing to do on the part of man; but rather teach man to cooperate with God, that he may be successful in overcoming.”¹¹⁶

When we acknowledge the role of our decision and preparatory steps, then it is clear that this is a divine-human collaboration, although the preparatory steps are also taken in God’s strength when Christ is in us through the Holy Spirit.

To my knowledge, this is the correct point of view, since God totally respects man and doesn’t act without his consent. Man shows this consent through steps of obedience. It is clear that God does the crucial part. We need to see all the phases of such a process and consequently see those involved—God and man—working together.

We find a good example of divine-human collaboration in the battle between Israel and Amalek in the desert (see Ex 17:8–16). Joshua fought with his troops, but they were victorious because Moses prayed, with the support of Aaron and Hur.

¹¹⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 309.

¹¹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2003), p. 454.

¹¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *A New Life* (Revival and Beyond) (Payson, AZ: Leaves-of-Autumn Books, 1972), pp. 38, 39.

Different sizes of obedience steps

Mary, mother of Jesus.

When the angel Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus to Mary, she could only express her consent to God's will. She said: "*Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.*" (Luk 1:38, KJV) Beyond that, there was nothing she could do except wait for God's intervention. At that moment, she could only give her consent or not give it. This acceptance of God's will brought great changes in her life and, from a human point of view, a high risk. As we can see, Mary lived in complete surrender.

The ten lepers.

The lepers who came to Jesus cried, "*Master, have mercy on us.*" Jesus saw their faith and responded, "*Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.*" (Luk 17:13,14, KJV)

These men manifested their trust and their decision by immediately going. Jesus did not go for them. Were they healed by going? Certainly not! They were healed because Jesus healed them according to their trusting obedience. They had no part in their actual recovery. Nevertheless, their trust and the manifestation of their trust through steps of obedience opened the door for the miracle that Jesus performed for them. Jesus alone performed the miracle.

The healing of Naaman.

Remember how Naaman was healed from leprosy? God's instructions through Elisha were as follows: "*Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.*" (2 Kgs 5:10, KJV) Naaman was angry about this order. Only after he had been persuaded by his servants did he have enough trust to do it. God did not take it from him to go to the Jordan and immersing himself in the water. After Naaman dipped himself in the water the seventh time, he was healed of leprosy. Did the seven immersions heal him? No! The steps of obedience he made as a result of his small faith were the steps that released God's healing. We see again that small faith in God and steps of obedience led to God's miracle. Naaman had no part in this miracle. But without his preparatory steps nothing would have happened.

Rudi and Marie Ana Hirschmann.

After World War II, a young couple who had just been baptized into the Adventist Church were living in a small town near Bad Aibling, Germany. Marie

Ana was expecting their first child and had to quit her job as a schoolteacher for health reasons.

In his search for a job, Rudi went daily to Munich for weeks on end, but in vain. Their savings melted away until they only had six Marks (the German currency at the time). In addition, they had an envelope with money that belonged to God. It was their tithe money, which they had set aside. What should they do?

Maria Ana said, “Rudi, when our money is all gone, we will be tempted to use God’s money. So it would be best not to keep it at home. When you take the train to Munich tomorrow, take the money with you and bring it to the treasurer of the conference.”

So that’s what Rudi did. He brought the money to the treasurer. She asked Rudi how they were doing, and he explained the situation.

“Wait a moment,” she said and made a phone call. Then she said, “I think we have found a job for you. Go to this address and ask for Mr. Bauer.”

A half hour later Rudi was employed. The Hirschmanns had paid their tithe although they were financially broke. They manifested their faith by taking a step of obedience, and God intervened at that moment.¹¹⁷

A tour company on the island of Guam.

A couple who owned a large tour company on the island of Guam became Christians. The wife was baptized first and then the husband in January 2004. They very prayerfully prepared for Sabbath observance in their company. They cancelled all their services with hotels on Sabbath. The husband explained the reasons for these measures to travel agencies, hotels, and sales agents who used their tour services. Many of the clients responded that they would have to give their business to other tour companies, the couple’s competition. The man’s employees were afraid they would lose their jobs. This decision seemed like a death sentence for the company. But listen to what our brother has to say: “I still remember the first Sabbath we closed. On Friday evening, we switched the answering machine on for the reservation calls. On the first Saturday we were closed, the weather unexpectedly changed, and rain fell in torrents the whole day. In the evening we discovered that the answering machine was full of reservations for Sunday. Over the next six months the weather held the same pattern: beautiful

117 Maria Ana Hirschmann, *I Changed Gods* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1968), p. 156.

weather on Friday, torrential rain on Sabbath, and beautiful weather on Sunday. God took care of us.”¹¹⁸

The couple’s part in this miracle was trusting God and taking the preparatory steps. The miracles that followed could only be performed by God.

Let’s remember this: “As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”¹¹⁹ God has laid great blessing on the obedience of faith—living out our trust in God and our surrender to Him.

Why is obedience for our own good?

God designed it so that obedience is the best way possible for us. Jeremiah 7:23 says, “*Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, **that it may be well with you.***” Any medical doctor would confirm that a remedy can only heal if it is conscientiously administered. This means that we must follow the doctor’s instructions if we want to be healed. The best physician cannot help if his instructions are not properly followed. Obedience is not only a logical consequence of our trust and surrender, but also obedience is in our best interest, since all of God’s commandments were given for our own good.

What happened with the brass serpent in the wilderness (see Num 21:4–9)? When the people looked at the serpent as God commanded, they were healed. Did turning their heads cause the healing? No, of course not. They were healed because they showed their faith in God by looking at the serpent. God alone healed them. Obedience was for their own good.

Likewise, “*by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house*” (Heb 11:7, KJV). The construction of the ark was a result of Noah’s trust in God, and he showed that his faith was genuine. He invested all his fortune and time into this construction, and he certainly did not regret it. Wasn’t his obedience for his own good? He did not know beforehand, but he lived in hope. One thing is clear, the construction of this vessel was done through God’s guidance and power.

¹¹⁸ Steve Kasperbauer, *Gott ist treu* (Braunau/Austria: Copyright Brigitte Kinder, 2013). A full report about this experience is published in German in the *MISSIONSBRIEF* (mission letter) No. 40, March/ April 2014.

¹¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 333.

One-sided opinions

Unfortunately, today, God's ordinances are seen in a very unbalanced light. God's law is only thought of in terms of restrictive commandments that have to be obeyed. However, God's commandments are, first and foremost, promises for us. God's laws show us what He can do in our life when we are connected to Him by a trusting and loving relationship.

God's commandments are laws of blessings. Obedience is simply the mind-set through which we can have divine wisdom and power for our daily concerns. When we see obedience from this perspective, then we lose our fear and see it as a joy.

Obedience, a gift from God

When Jesus produces obedience in us, then it means that obedience is a gift. If we see obedience as a gift, this helps to avoid two dangers: (1) the fallacy of "cheap grace" and (2) the temptation of legalism.

"Cheap grace" usually means that a person is saved when they accept Jesus and they think no obedience is necessary. They say that the law has been abolished since we couldn't keep it anyway. This is what carnal Christians believe. But in God's power we want to and can obey.

On the other hand, the intention to earn God's kingdom is not only an enslavement, but also—if taken seriously—a heavy burden. This is the snare of legalism.

When Jesus produces obedience in us in connection with our decision and desire, then we see that obedience is important and we will realize that it doesn't have a meritorious character in itself, because it was given to us as a gift.¹²⁰

Obedience is necessary as a result, as a fruit of our relationship with God and our salvation, but not a prerequisite. Everyone can come to Jesus without any prerequisites, just as he or she is. But no one can remain as they are. Would we think that when a thief has been converted—saved—that she can continue to rob people?

Putting ourselves and our concerns into greater hands

It is important to let go of ourselves and our concerns and entrust them to God's leading. We shouldn't see ourselves as too important. This applies

¹²⁰ See the *Adult Bible Study Guide*, March 31, 2011.

to every area of life. We shouldn't hold anything back. Should I hold something back when I can put all of it into much greater and stronger hands—God's hands? Would that be smart?

If we want the Lord to care for us, to meet our needs, to protect us from our enemies, to lead us the best way, then it is logical that we have to follow His voice and go the way He chooses for us. *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”* (Prov 3:5,6)

We can understand this advice very well nowadays. Many car drivers use a navigation system today. We rely on the larger overview of the system. But that doesn't mean that our reason has been deactivated. It is still needed. It is still our job to drive. On the road we are connected with a “leader” who has a greater overview and tells us where to turn, whether we should take a detour because of a traffic jam, whether we are driving too fast, and so on. By God's grace we can go through life with a divine “navigation system.” Therefore, it is important to rely with our whole heart upon our wonderful heavenly Guide and Giver of reason. He promises to guide us correctly. He even vouches for it with His reputation. *“He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.”* (Ps 23:3). Here obedience is also completely in our own interest.

By following the divine laws, whether laws of nature, or spiritual laws, there are positive results for everybody. Even non-believers can experience positive results if they observe these divine laws. I call this the natural blessing. But a lot more happens, even miracles, when spiritual laws are followed. I call this the supernatural blessing.

Trust and obedience enrich each other. In James 2:22, we read: *“Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?”* (KJV) Trust in God fosters obedience, and obedience fosters our trust in God.

I would like to repeat an apt quote from Dennis Smith: “When someone lives in a close relationship with God through the Holy Spirit, then obedience comes naturally and from the heart, without giving it great thought.”¹²¹

When we understand obedience correctly, then we will better understand the wonderful statements in the Psalms (especially Ps 19 and 119) about God's law. They show that salvation, redemption, and the law belong together. A saved person will esteem God's law and, through their life in the Holy Spirit and with Jesus in their hearts, they will gladly be obedient. I believe that a carnal Christian cannot even understand the statements in Psalm 119. Presumably, they would consider them an exaggeration. On

121 Dennis Smith, *40 Days – Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming* (R&H 2009) pp. 21, 22

the other hand, a spiritual Christian can empathize with what the psalmist wrote.

God has told us: “As we walk day by day in the light He sends us, in willing obedience to all His requirements, our experience grows and broadens until we reach the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.”¹²²

How much obedience does God expect?

How much obedience does Jesus want to achieve in me? A little, a lot, or completely?

A clear example appears in the life of Moses in Exodus 4:24–26. In the desert of Midian, Moses was commissioned to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. “On the way from Midian [to Egypt], Moses received a startling and terrible warning of the Lord’s displeasure. An angel appeared to him in a threatening manner, as if he would immediately destroy him. No explanation was given; but Moses remembered that he had disregarded one of God’s requirements; yielding to the persuasion of his wife, he had neglected to perform the rite of circumcision upon their youngest son.” The youth was circumcised immediately. “... The angel then permitted Moses to pursue his journey. In his mission to Pharaoh, Moses was to be placed in a position of great peril; his life could be preserved only through the protection of holy angels. But while living in neglect of a known duty, he would not be secure; for he could not be shielded by the angels of God.”¹²³

The lesson to be drawn out of this incident can be found further in *Patriarchs and Prophets*: “In the time of trouble just before the coming of Christ, the righteous will be preserved through the ministration of heavenly angels; but there will be no security for the transgressor of God’s law. Angels cannot then protect those who are disregarding one of the divine precepts.”¹²⁴

Observing all God’s commandments is for our protection, our happiness, and our well-being. We know that Adam and Eve had to leave Eden due to one single sin. I think this is a clear answer to the question of how much obedience God expects. It is understandable that the Lord expects obedience in all things, when we keep in mind that Jesus accomplishes this obedience in us, and it is in our best interest. Jesus wants to accomplish the will of God in us, just as He did as a human being here on this earth. His

¹²² Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People*, pp. 15, 16.

¹²³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 255, 256.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

attitude as a human being was: *“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”* (Ps 40:8, KJV) He said to His disciples, *“I have kept My Father’s commandments.”* (John 15:10)

Moreover, if complete obedience brings complete happiness and life in abundance here and in eternity, then it is obvious that a decrease in obedience means a loss of blessings. Everyone who is and ever will be in God’s kingdom will joyfully obey God. This ensures love and harmony for all creatures.

Final thoughts

Jeremiah 7:23 summarizes this whole topic. These words were given to Israel while they were leaving Egypt. *“Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.”*

Here the Lord has given us a precious promise. What does He promise if we obey His Word? *“I will be your God, and you shall be My people.”* But He adds that we have to go the whole way for our own well-being. We may use this text as a promise in a prayer for an obedient heart.

What happened to the apostle John?

We can see the wonderful result of obedience of faith in the life of John, Jesus’ disciple. In *Steps to Christ*, we read: “Day by day his heart was drawn out toward Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. His resentful, ambitious temper was yielded to the molding power of Christ. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. The power of the love of Christ wrought a transformation of character. This is the sure result of union with Jesus. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Christ’s Spirit, His love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven.”¹²⁵

“The Lord has determined that every soul who obeys His word shall have His joy, His peace, His continual keeping power.”¹²⁶ It is my desire and my prayer that all believers persevere to experience the great joy of obedience of faith. May God bestow on us great victories in obedience of faith through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. *“He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”* (1 John 2:17, KJV)

¹²⁵ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 73.

¹²⁶ Ellen G. White, *In Heavenly Places* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1999), p. 53.

“The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him ... to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.” (Ps 103:17,18)

We want to hear about a great step of obedience.

Holy Spirit convinces an escaped convict to return to prison. I was born into an Adventist family. At 19, I was baptized. In 2016, I was sentenced to 43 years in prison for murder. It’s my fifth year in prison now. I was able to escape from prison in March 2017. After the first Sabbath, I met a woman who showed me the book “Steps to Personal Revival.” On the Monday after, I bought it in the Adventist bookstore. To my own surprise, I read it through the same week. I could sense my inner emptiness, which I have had all my life—without the Holy Spirit. Then I dedicated my whole life to Jesus. I went back to prison in October 2018. My escape was not charged to me. And best of all, my trial is now taking place before Almighty God. I have appealed to the Supreme Court. After reading this book, I was so blessed that I am deeply convinced: “There are no hopeless cases for God! I am now the leader of the prayer ministry. The booklet was distributed here in the Barawagi Prison among the prisoners. Many prisoners were touched by this booklet after reading it. I am glad that I can serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It was and is a real blessing for us.”¹²⁷

Prayer: *“Father, thank you that in your infinite wisdom, tremendous power and glorious love you have provided full guidance for us to attain the best life possible. You created everything in our best interest. I want to praise you and thank you for this. Please give me complete trust in your ways and help me to follow you in all matters with my whole heart in surrender and obedience.” Amen*

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Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *What is our part in the divine work being done in us, including our actions?*

2. *What is the difference between faith and a mere consent of the truth?*

3. *When is consent from us important?*

4. *Why is obedience a great blessing for us?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *To be more aware of our role in divine working.*
 2. *For the insight to recognize where there is true faith or only consent in our lives.*
 3. *For faithful obedience and the subsequent blessing.*
 4. *For complete trust in God's leading and His principles.*

ATTRACTIVE FAITH THROUGH JESUS

*How can oneness be achieved among believers?
What makes our faith appealing to our family
and the world?
What changes in us make us witnesses?
How does revival generate mission?*

My prayer partner from a forty-day devotional time once said: “I long for an attractive faith so that my children will also follow Christ.”

Mary Jones, a girl from Wales, was able to go once a week to a distant family to read their Bible. This took place from age ten to fifteen. She loved the Bible with all her heart. She did a lot of extra jobs in order to earn money to buy a Bible of her own. For six years she saved every penny she earned.

When she was almost sixteen, Mary walked barefoot twenty-five miles to see a pastor from whom she wanted to buy a Bible. He said that he still had two Bibles, but they were already promised to other people. Mary started to weep bitterly. The pastor asked her why she was crying. So she told him how she had saved money for six years in order to purchase a Bible. The pastor no longer had the heart to refuse and allowed her to have a Bible. Overjoyed, she left for home.

Was the Bible attractive to her? Was faith attractive to this girl?

Incidentally, this took place in 1800. This experience impressed the pastor so much that he took steps to found the first worldwide Bible society, the British and Foreign Bible Society. Later many other Bible societies were founded.

And all this because a young girl loved the Bible so much that she devoted her life to getting one. Attractive faith has an impact.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Taken from Wikipedia, “Mary Jones.”

The meaning of “attractive”

Dictionaries define attractive as appealing, endearing, fascinating, desirable. Who does not want to have faith like that? I believe that anyone who really thinks about it would wish to have an appealing, fascinating faith.

How can I desire such a faith? What should it look like?

- ▶ It should offer a firm and reliable foundation for life.
- ▶ It should be based on truth, not on errors or lies.
- ▶ It should be based on the revelation of our loving and all-wise God, not mixed with human doctrines, so that it will serve our best interest.
- ▶ It should be entirely convincing and bring great joy.
- ▶ It should bring definite advantages for our own life.
- ▶ It should be able to sustain me in difficult circumstances—in sickness, in distress, in death.
- ▶ It should convey hope for eternity.

All these points have to do with what happens within ourselves. But attractive faith should have further influence. My prayer partner said, “I long for an attractive faith so that my children will also follow Christ.”

- ▶ An attractive faith should lead our loved ones and other people to gain interest in it and want to have it for themselves.

What is meant by attractive faith?

Attractive faith is spiritual Christianity—life with Jesus Christ in us through the Holy Spirit. We should keep the following Bible passage in mind: *“That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love ... that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.”* (Eph 3:16,17,19)

These verses say that God’s Spirit strengthens us and thus Christ lives in us and will unfold His nature of love in us. This frees us from the bondage to our self. We experience the glorious freedom of being God’s children.

Jesus says: *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”* (John 14:6) When Jesus is in my heart through the Holy Spirit, then He is also my way to the Father, my guide to the truth. He is the means for the highest quality of life.

How does Jesus describe attractive faith?

Jesus spoke of a fullness that no person can give. It is deep inner peace and real joy, because the God of love and peace is allowed to take up residence in the heart. This condition is not dependent on external circumstances; however, it is dependent on childlike trust and faith in God's power. Paul wrote to Jesus' followers: *"That you may be filled with all the fullness of God."* (Eph 3:19b)

Jesus in our hearts. That is what we need, *"for the full content of divine nature lives in Christ, in his humanity, and you have been given full life in union with him"* (Col 2:9,10, GNT). This is the highest summit we can reach in this life. It is what God wants to give us out of His great love.

The woman at Jacob's well experienced this. Jesus used an example from daily life to illustrate the fulfillment of this longing. Back in those times, water was one of the most valuable and important things a person needed. Through Jesus we come to the *"fountain of water springing up into everlasting life"* (John 4:14), which means we can drink from this fountain and our longing will be satisfied.

All people have a longing for happiness. They don't know that in reality it is a longing for a personal relationship with God, because according to Ecclesiastes 3:11, *"He [God] has put eternity in their hearts."* Whoever hasn't found intimate fellowship with God has a vacuum in their hearts, according to Blaise Pascal. As a result, people have a constant longing for more and more.

Jesus invites us to have faith in Him, to trust Him. The results will be obvious in the one who does, because *"out of his heart will flow rivers of living water"* (John 7:38). They have an overflowing life, an attractive charisma, and they exert an influence that will strengthen others.

Attractive faith is a rich and fulfilled life in this world and to an even greater, unimaginable degree in eternity.

God's Word shows that my faith is attractive to others

Let us read Jesus' prayer in John 17:20–23: *"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."* (NIV)

Jesus prayed that His disciples would be one through the ages. In that case, He was also praying for you and me. Jesus not only prayed for our unity, so that we feel good in our fellowship and help each other, but He also stated that the unity of the disciples would be attractive to the people in the world: *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”* (John 13:34,35) He shows us that due to the oneness of the disciples, the world will believe and know these three important things.

What does the world recognize in us?

1. The world knows that people are disciples of Jesus by the love within the circle of believers and within the church. This means the world is watching us. The world realizes that the loving behavior among the disciples is a result of their relationship with Jesus. (“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”)
2. Due to the oneness amongst Jesus’ disciples, the world believes that Jesus is God’s Ambassador. (“That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”) People in the world realize that Jesus is the Redeemer sent by God because of the loving togetherness of His disciples.
3. Amazingly, people in the world recognize that God loves them because of the loving behavior amongst His disciples. (“The world may know that thou ... hast loved them [the world], as thou hast loved me.”)

In summary, through the oneness amongst Jesus’ disciples, people will (1) recognize their relationship to Jesus, (2) recognize that Jesus was sent by God, and (3) recognize that God loves them. Jesus will be recognized by the world through the conduct of Spirit-filled disciples with each other. Jesus can exert this appealing influence through spiritual Christians. Revival generates mission.

Why is it that people learn something about God through the loving behavior of disciples?

After all, every person is very different. We have different talents and abilities; there are men, women, young and old. We often have different educational or cultural backgrounds. We have different temperaments, opinions, and experiences. In the world these differences often lead to tension

between people. They can also lead to rivalry and strife. That's why people are astonished by, and attracted to, groups of people among whom love, harmony, and helpfulness exist.

When I was a pastor in Munich, Germany, I visited with a former business friend in a small town nearby. He lived on a street where a large Adventist extended family lived together in one house. Knowing that I was an Adventist, he said to me, "The whole street is amazed that these fifteen or twenty people can live together in a house in harmony and without any conflicts." The neighbors recognized something: this was attractive faith.

Walter Schlund, who is now a member of a small church in Germany, tells another example of this phenomenon: "Before I was a Christian, we wanted to visit Romania and ended up in a flooded region. We still had 75 miles to our destination, but we could go no further. So we asked for directions. By coincidence, we spoke with an Adventist, who led us to the family of Pastor Biró. The family invited us to spend the night in their home, which we gratefully accepted. It was during this time with this family that I made the decision to surrender my life to Christ and become an Adventist. It was the way the family acted towards each other—the harmonious family life, the prevailing peace, the friendly atmosphere, the family worships. I experienced a quality of life that deeply impressed me. I wanted to have this too."¹²⁹ This was attractive faith.

I remember during my time in Regensburg, Germany, that over a period of time I visited some people in a certain residential area and I noticed their homes were always filled with tension and conflict. It is so much more pleasant when you have the privilege of experiencing visits with people who are different, whose hearts are filled with love.

Why can Attractive faith only come from God's Word?

Attractive faith is based solely on the Word of God—namely the Old and New Testaments.

When Jesus said, "*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said*" (John 7:38), He meant the Old Testament, since that was the only one in existence then. In John 17:14, He made it more clear when He said of His Father: "*I have given them thy word.*" (KJV) And in verse 17, He points out: "*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*" (KJV)

¹²⁹ *BWgung*, news magazine from the Seventh-day Adventists in Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Nr. 6/2012, S. 24.

Every religion in the world is a way to a god or gods that has been conceived by human beings. The only faith that has not been conceived by men, but has been revealed by God Himself, is biblical faith. Since God is love and He has infinite wisdom and ability, He established everything for our greatest benefit. Therefore, biblical faith is the most attractive faith that exists. In reality, it is the only attractive faith in the world. It does require that we have understood the biblical doctrines correctly and live according to them through the Spirit. According to the parable of the ten virgins, about half of the church have no such faith.

Through our trust in Jesus, we can experience joy and peace and experience our spiritual thirst being satisfied. Our God wishes that His love will become visible to others in our lives. That makes our faith attractive to them.

How is unity among disciples possible?

It is about being one in marriage and family, in the church and in the ministries. Jesus says: *“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”* (John 17:22, KJV).

What has Jesus given us? Glory!

What does this mean? The term glory is used in different ways in the Bible. First, it is used for the majesty and the greatness of God; second, for the glory of creation, and third, for God’s wonderful nature of love. At this point we should take a look at Exodus 33:18,19, where Moses says to God, *“Please show me your glory”* (ESV) *And the Lord answers, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee”* (KJV).

The glory of God is His character, which is characterized by love and goodness. Goodness is helping love in action. This helps us to understand Jesus’ statement that He has given us the glory of God so that we can be one with Him. The most important prerequisite for oneness is mutual love paired with respect and trust. God’s method for mission is to love human-kind through us, namely with *agape* love, God’s love. This is the kind of love that God wants to share through us.

After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, remarkable things are told about the early church: *“And when they had prayed ... they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and of one soul. ... And with great power the apostles gave witness. ... And great grace was upon them all.”* (Acts 4:31–33)

Oneness is not homogenization

Oneness is unity of mind, purpose, and essence. At the same time, the personality of each individual is retained. It doesn't abolish our personality. It is oneness of different people with different characters. And it is exactly this that evokes great astonishment: the oneness of different people.

Ellen White says: "The strongest witness that God has sent His Son into the world is the existence of harmony and union among men of varied dispositions who form His church. ...

... Unbelievers are watching to see if the faith of professed Christians is exerting a sanctifying influence upon their lives."¹³⁰ Elsewhere she writes: "Transformation of character [in disciples] is the testimony to the world of an indwelling Christ."¹³¹

How Can Oneness Be Achieved?

The oneness of disciples is achieved by Christ living in them through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said,

John 17:21: "*That they also may be one in us.*"

John 17:23: "*I in them, and thou in me.*"

John 15:4: "*Abide in Me, and I in You.*"

The apostle Paul puts it like this,

Colossians 1:27: "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*"

Galatians 2:20: "*I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" (KJV)

Thus, oneness is possible when Christ is in you and me. It is not possible without our being filled with the Holy Spirit. Then we can only be "nice" to each other. Ellen White writes: "We are to seek most earnestly to be of one mind, of one purpose. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, and nothing less, can bring us to this place. Let us by self-renunciation prepare our hearts to receive the Holy Spirit that a great work may be done for us ..." ¹³²

Elsewhere she writes: "When God's people are one in the unity of the Spirit, all of Phariseism, all of self-righteousness, which was the sin of the Jewish nation, will be expelled from all hearts. The mold of Christ will be upon each individual member of His body, and His people will be new bot-

¹³⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 549, 550.

¹³¹ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 233.

¹³² Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, November 5; p. 318.

bles into which He can pour His new wine, and the new wine will not break the bottles. God will make known the mystery which hath been hidden for ages. He will make known what are the '*riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory*' (Col 1:27)."¹³³

They Found Unity

This second experience we have experienced with another community from our district. My predecessor said, "You need a lot of courage for this church because you are going into a real minefield!" We quickly realized that the tensions were very high. There were quarrels, divisions, injuries and unforgiveness. Uncontrolled emotional outbursts and personal attacks covered the entire community with a dark cloud. It was sad to see how entangled the church members were in a web of unforgiveness and did not realize they could not make it out on their own. After house groups were founded, the brochure *Steps to Personal Revival* was distributed for study in these groups. The members responded positively and were very grateful for this brochure.

Here, too, the members began to perform the 10 prayer and fasting days individually. (*10 Days – Prayers and Devotions to Experience the Baptism of the Holy Spirit* by Dennis Smith) Finally, the desire was expressed to do it together as a church. The meetings took place again at four o'clock in the morning. At first there were not many participants, but gradually more joined and there was a wonderful, peaceful, spiritual atmosphere. One sensed that God was working. He miraculously prepared the church for the final step that was so hard for her: the step to true forgiveness. Eventually, the wall fell and one person after another publicly begged forgiveness. Others were directly addressing the person with whom they were arguing and asking for forgiveness. They hugged each other. Tears flowed. The sad faces became happy again and love returned to their hearts. It is always a wonderful experience to see and experience. Only God can guide people through his Holy Spirit. There is hope for minefields!

Pastor F.H. and his wife, #85b

¹³³ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 386.

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. What does “attractive” mean? What is attractive faith?

2. Where can we read about this attractive faith in the Bible?

3. How is this type of faith shown practically in life?

4. What are the things people know when they see unity among believers?

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.
- Pray with your prayer partner:
 1. For attractive faith, which is a blessing for us and can be a blessing to others.
 2. For insight to see where this attractive faith is missing in daily life.
 3. For God’s leading and strength to help us make more room for this winsome faith.
 4. That your faith will encourage others to be open to God’s working.
 5. That Christ will live in us and constantly be more visible.

*What changes in us make us witnesses?
How does revival generate mission?*

How does Christ live in Me?

An explanation can be found in Ephesians 3:16,17: *“That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; ... being rooted and grounded in love.”* As we have observed before, Christ lives in us through the Holy Spirit. Since our inner being *“is renewed day by day”* (2 Cor 4:16), it is important to renew our surrender to Jesus every morning and ask Him by faith—preferably by claiming a promise such as Luke 11:13—for us to be filled by the Holy Spirit.¹³⁴ The oneness of individuals with Christ leads to the disciples being closer to each other. Thus, our “being in Christ” is the basis for oneness.

“This [oneness, unity] is a gift, which is bestowed on the believers by Christ living in them [John 17:22,23]. ... Therefore, oneness begins with each individual.”¹³⁵

What effect does it have on us when Jesus lives in us?

There are three major effects of Jesus living in us: the fruit of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and the ability to witness.

The fruit and the gifts of the Spirit are essential for the success of togetherness. And then these two areas have a significant influence on the third area: our testimony about Jesus. Our personal transformation is a prerequisite for our testimony and our oneness as disciples. The resulting behavior is used by the Lord to attract unsaved people and to enable us to witness. Through our testimony we become Jesus’ co-workers, because He came *“to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luk 19:10).

Let us take a closer look at these three areas:

¹³⁴ Luke 11:13: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (KJV).

¹³⁵ *Adult Bible Study Guide*, November 21, 2012.

1. The fruit of the Spirit. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”* (Gal 5:22) All these characteristics play an important role in daily life. They are an important prerequisite for unity in marriage and family, in discipleship groups, in churches and ministries.

Paul speaks about the overall importance of one fruit, which is the unfolding of God’s nature in us. In Ephesians 3:17, we read: *“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love.”* (KJV; emphasis added) The fruit he speaks about is love. In Greek it is called *agape*. This love is God’s nature. It is unselfish love that seeks the best for God and man. Eva von Tiele-Winckler explains the fruit of God’s love as follows:

- ▶ Joy is rejoicing love.
- ▶ Peace is resting love.
- ▶ Longsuffering is sustaining love.
- ▶ Gentleness is radiant love.
- ▶ Goodness is helping love.
- ▶ Faith is trusting love.
- ▶ Meekness is defenseless love.
- ▶ Chastity is pure love.

I think it is obvious that the fruit of these Spirit-given characteristics is love. That’s why it speaks about the fruit in the singular form and not in the plural form. Ellen White says of these characteristics: “Transformation of character is the testimony to the world of an indwelling Christ.”¹³⁶

2. The gifts of the Spirit. The other important effect the life of Jesus has in us is receiving gifts of the Spirit. God has given us diverse talents. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul compares the church, meaning a specific number of people, with the human body. The body consists of numerous different organs. It is important for life and health that each organ functions well. This shows that it is our duty to serve each other with our various talents and thus contribute to the overall success of the family, the group, the church. Each one is assigned a different work. God has given us different abilities.

The lists of gifts in the New Testament are not exhaustive. There were many more gifts in the early church; and in our modern age, there are additional gifts.

¹³⁶ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 233.

Wordgifts	Miraculous gifts	Service gifts
Wisdom speech <i>1 Cor 12:8</i>	(miraculous) faith <i>1 Cor 12:9</i>	Gifts of leadership <i>Rom 12:8; 1 Cor 12:28</i>
Knowledge speech <i>1 Cor 12:8</i>	healing gifts <i>1 Cor 12:9,28</i>	General services <i>Rom 12:7</i>
Prophetic speech <i>1 Cor 12:10,28; Rom 12:7</i>	Languages (tongues) <i>1 Cor 12:10,28</i>	Gift of helping <i>1 Cor 12:28</i>
Gift of teaching <i>1 Cor 12:28; Rom 12:7; Eph 4:11</i>	Interpretation of the tongues speech <i>1 Cor 12:10,30</i>	Gift of giving <i>Rom 12:8</i>
Evangelist gift <i>Eph 4:11</i>	Differentiation of the spirits <i>1 Cor 12:10</i>	Gift of mercy <i>Rom 12:8</i>
Apostle gift <i>1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11</i>	Miraculous powers <i>1 Cor 12:10,28</i>	Gift of hospitality <i>1 Petr 4:9</i>
Gift of exhortation <i>Rom 12:28</i>		pastoral gift <i>Eph 4:11</i>

Johannes Mager, *Auf den Spuren des Heiligen Geistes* (Lüneburg: Advent-Verlag, 1999), S. 121.

It is vital that these two elements—fruit of the Spirit and gifts of the Spirit—are manifested in our nature and through our speech, feelings, thoughts, and actions. There is only one way that this can happen. We have to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The key aspects for having a life in the Holy Spirit are daily praying for complete surrender to God and asking in faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit. An example of such a prayer can be found in the booklet *Steps to Personal Revival*, chapter 4. Readers have told me experiences that illustrate the effect of this kind of prayer. This one is from Rheinland, Germany: “We have had amazing experiences. Many brothers and sisters pray the sample prayer [from *Steps to Personal Revival*] together every day, and I have been praying it together with a friend for five months. Not only are things improving for us personally, but also in our homes, relationships, marriages, in spiritual areas, in the church, but not in a way that creates big conflicts. Rather, it happens in a quiet, natural manner. We are amazed and see therein God’s refining process, which makes life easier in a way, since we feel God’s presence more and more.”

Do you see how this testimony shows that “Christ in us” through the Holy Spirit has positive effects on our togetherness?

The report continues: “Recently a sister told me: ‘This is how I always imagined leading a good and pleasing life to God, but there were too many difficulties in the way. Finally, my dream has come true. And this is only the beginning!’”¹³⁷ This sister found attractive faith.

3. To bear witness to Jesus. “*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8, KJV) Jesus told the disciples that they would be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will experience spiritual revival and reformation. **What is revival?** Dennis Smith explains: “It is a time when the life of a Christian is renewed in Jesus. Joy about salvation fills his heart; a desire for the salvation of others starts to burn in him. This means that as revived Christians we long for the salvation of other people.”¹³⁸

Ellen White says: “Without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ. When His disciples are connected with Christ, when the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, even the poorest and most ignorant of them will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them the channel for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe.”¹³⁹

The well-known evangelist and revival preacher R. A. Torrey relates a remarkable experience. A very competent female pastoral aid spoke with a man about his salvation for two hours and accomplished nothing. So she asked Torrey to talk to him. After ten minutes the man made a positive decision. The woman was speechless, since Torrey had used the same Bible texts as she had. Torrey commented as follows: “Since she had accomplished nothing, he [Dr. Torrey] was afraid that would happen to him too. Therefore he asked God in his helplessness to have the Holy Spirit do this work—and He did it.”¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ E-mail message sent to H. Haubeil on December 18, 2012.

¹³⁸ Dennis Smith, *40 Days: Prayers and Devotions to Revive Your Experience With God*, book 2, Day 6; p. 24.

¹³⁹ Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, October 25; p. 307.

¹⁴⁰ R. A. Torrey, *Der Heilige Geist* (Frankfurt/Main: 1966), S. 37, 38; a short summary.

Revival brings about mission

“Till they receive the Holy Spirit, they cannot bear this message with power. Till they receive the Spirit, they cannot realize what God can do through them.”¹⁴¹ God has planned that people will be attracted to our personal behavior and our loving unity. This is especially true of our children, youth, and family members, but also of our relatives, acquaintances, neighbors, colleagues, friends, and strangers we meet. People become responsive to our faith, and God can direct people to us.

The following words show us what a strong influence our behavior can have: “If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one.”¹⁴²

But the Holy Spirit is indispensable for this. Ellen White calls pastors’ attention to the following: “They [church members] are not able to present the great and glorious truths of God’s Holy Word that would convict and convert souls through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The power of God awaits their demand and reception.”¹⁴³

How can spiritual awakening be retained?

In 1893, a revival took place in Adventist institutions in Battle Creek, Michigan, but the revival soon petered out. God gave Ellen White insight into the cause. She said: “Had all the many souls, then enlightened, gone to work at once to impart to others that which God had given to them for that very purpose, more light would have been given, more power bestowed.”¹⁴⁴

We receive more light and more strength by spreading the gospel. When we care for other people, then it has valuable repercussions in our own life. This is why it is extremely important to encourage people to intercede for unreached individuals during the 40 days of worship.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, October 4; p. 286.

¹⁴² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2002), 9:189.

¹⁴³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 175.

¹⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1; p. 129.

¹⁴⁵ See Dennis Smith, *40 Days*, books 1 and 2, Introduction.

Where should our mission begin?

Jesus told His disciples where they should start their mission: they should start where they were. For us, this means we should start at home and where people know us. Why did Jesus plan it this way? Where people know us, our testimony will be accepted if it is accompanied by corresponding loving behavior. The testimony of our life has to correspond with the testimony of our mouth. It can be seen at home if we are really filled with the Holy Spirit.

What importance does Jesus' new commandment have?

Jesus says in John 13:34,35: *"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."* (KJV)

A Spirit-filled life leads to a further important fruit of the Spirit: meekness. Meekness is Jesus' mind-set and is essential for good togetherness. This is the reason why Jesus gave the new commandment immediately after He washed His disciples' feet. The foot washing was a representation of meekness.

Meekness is not a characteristic of the natural man. However, we can daily ask God for meekness by claiming promises such as Micah 6:8.

Meekness is a very important characteristic for the Spirit-filled person, but it is usually completely misjudged. In the new commandment, Jesus speaks about loving one another "as I have loved you." Jesus loves us with divine love. We call this kind of love *agape*, the Greek word for divine love. We can only have this love if we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote, *"... the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."* (Rom 5:5 NKJV) "Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found."¹⁴⁶

So the presence of meekness is a question of whether Jesus is on the "throne" of our heart. Do we allow Him to govern everything in our life? Have we completely surrendered our lives to Him? Do we daily confirm this?

¹⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 551.

What about me?

Do I have attractive faith? Does Jesus live in my heart through the Holy Spirit? If yes, then I need to care for and grow in this attractive faith. But if I realize that I don't have attractive faith yet, then I definitely need to confront this important question.

There are helpful aids in finding this attractive faith (for those, who don't have it yet) and for caring for this faith (for those, who already have it) in my booklet *Steps to Personal Revival* and in the book by Dennis Smith *40 Days – Devotionals and Prayers in Preparation of the Second Coming of the Lord*. These two books complement each other in an invaluable way. I can only recommend with my whole heart that you read these books—yes, even more than one time.

How can our personal lack of the Holy Spirit have an impact on other people?

Without Jesus in us through the Holy Spirit, we are carnal Christians (see 1 Cor 3:1–3; Rom 8:1–17; Gal 5:16ff). We are not saved in this condition (Rom 8:9). We are living by our own human abilities and powers. The results are that our family and children will probably also be carnal Christians, with all the regrettable consequences.¹⁴⁷ Let's keep in mind that the love of God can only be in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Ellen White says, "Those who have never experienced the tender, winning love of Christ cannot lead others to the fountain of life. His love in the heart is a constraining power, which leads men to reveal Him in the conversation, in the tender, pitiful spirit, in the uplifting of the lives of those with whom they associate."¹⁴⁸

When Jesus lives in us through the Holy Spirit, then He will enable us to witness for God in a completely natural manner. "*For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" (Matt 12:34, KJV)

How valuable is attractive faith?

We can see how valuable this attractive faith is when we look at Christians who suffered disadvantages, persecution, loss of possessions, or martyrdom rather than give up this faith. What made them so resilient under these bitter hardships? While we see proof that they were filled with the

¹⁴⁷ See Helmut Haubeil, *Steps to Personal Revival*, pp. 36, 74, 76.

¹⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 550, 551.

Holy Spirit, martyrs cannot tell us how they felt in their mortal agony. However, the papal report on the death of Hus and Jerome at the stake in Constance gives us an important clue. If somebody burns, he can only shriek. But these two men sang hymns of praise. Such a thing is only possible with God's help. They had true joy in spite of their pain. "Wherever His Spirit reigns, there peace abides. And there will be joy also."¹⁴⁹

The Huguenot family of Durant in France in the eighteenth century is an impressive example. The Durants were persecuted by the church because of their biblical faith. The father spent fourteen years in prison before he was pardoned. The mother died in prison. Their son Pierre—a zealous preacher—was executed. Their daughter Marie was held captive in a tower together with other women. She would have been released if she had revoked her faith, but she did not do that. In 1768, she was released after thirty-eight years of imprisonment. For Marie Durant, biblical faith was an attractive faith that she could not give up.¹⁵⁰

Examples of great missionary impact

Daniel and his friends were willing to accept disadvantages when they asked for a different diet. And what did God do? He blessed their obedience. They were more handsome, healthier, and more intelligent than the others. They received high positions. We know the report about Daniel's friends in the fiery furnace and about Daniel's night in the lions' den. Their faith was more important to them than their lives. And what was the result? Two world kingdoms were able to hear their testimony in word and deed about the true God. Their example had a large impact on mission work.

The same is true of Joseph in Egypt. He refused to commit adultery. Because of Potiphar's wife's slander, he was sent to prison. But God used his loyalty to let a whole world empire know about the true God.

Remember the young girl working as a slave in Naaman's household? Her testimony in word and deed ultimately led to the conversion of this commander. I am convinced that he not only followed the living God with great joy, but that he also gave this young girl her freedom and personally took her home, along with many gifts.

In Matthew 13:44–46, Jesus tells about a man who found a treasure in a field. This treasure was so valuable to him that he sold everything he pos-

¹⁴⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 153.

¹⁵⁰ Taken from Wikipedia, "Marie Durant."

sessed and purchased the field. He gave up everything for the kingdom of heaven—or as I have described it, attractive faith. Can we see how precious this faith is?

Final thoughts

Ellen White says, “Those who abide in Jesus will be happy, cheerful, and joyful in God.”¹⁵¹ Attractive faith already gives us a joyful, vibrant, victorious, and happy life and a well-founded hope for the kingdom of God. Even in difficult times, if we go through a dark valley, our faith will still be attractive through the presence of God.

Through attractive faith we can contribute to a good togetherness, and thus other people’s interest will be kindled in our faith.

May God help us fully understand the great importance of oneness! May He help us through the power of the Holy Spirit, with Christ in us, to grow to be like Christ for our own joy and blessing and also to attract our loved ones and fellow men. *“The joy of the Lord is your strength.”* (Neh 8:10) **“If we do represent Christ, we shall make His service appear attractive, as it really is.”**¹⁵²

Prayer: *“Heavenly Father, I wholeheartedly thank you that truly following Jesus brings the most exciting life. Please help me to stay in a close relationship with Jesus all my life. Also use my life to lead my loved ones and other people to Him.” Amen*

¹⁵¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2002), 4:626.

¹⁵² Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 116.

Personal Thoughts and Discussion Guide

1. *What are the ramifications of Christ living in us?*

2. *What are fruit of the Spirit?*

3. *What are gifts of the Spirit?*

4. *What effects does revival have in our personal life? How does it influence our surroundings? How does it motivate us?*

5. *What biblical examples do we have which show, through simple trust in God, that great things can happen?*

Our Prayer Time

- *Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic.*
- *Pray with your prayer partner:*
 1. *That the fruit of the Spirit will continually grow in you.*
 2. *For the ability to recognize gifts of the Spirit and rightly use them.*
 3. *For courage and joy to be a witness of Christ living in you—through your life, through your words and deeds, which don't take place in your own strength, but rather arise from an attractive faith.*
 4. *For joy in studying God's Word, and for sober-mindedness and wisdom.*

TESTIMONY

Diary of Changes after Surrender

At the beginning of 2014, I kept asking myself, “Will Jesus say to me one day: ‘I do not know you’? Am I one of the foolish virgins?” The thought of this was unbearable since I wanted to receive eternal life from God, but due to various things in my life, I always had a guilty conscience and wasn’t always on the right track.

Fortunately, I came across two books, *Steps to Personal Revival* and *Abide in Jesus*. After reading them the first time, I realized that something had to change in my life. I read the booklets several times in order to really understand everything. In addition, I heard a testimony from a devout sister who had become a spiritual Christian just a few months earlier.

Now I know with certainty that at the beginning of the year I was “carnal” in my thinking and I would have died, since Jesus would have had to say, “I do not know you.”

Through my complete surrender to Jesus, God was able to completely change my life in only one month.

Now I get up at 4:30 a.m. to study God’s Word. In my own power, this would have been inconceivable - sleep was more important. I pray differently - as one who is Spirit filled. I ask the Lord every day what He wants me to do that day. And God answers. I daily invite the Holy Spirit to live and work in my heart. I have clearer thoughts and dress in a more “feminine” way.

Moreover, I don’t eat constantly anymore. That was impossible for me to stop in my own power. I can meet the daily demands much more peacefully, and the stress doesn’t tie my stomach up in knots. My husband also noticed changes in me after three weeks. He said, “You aren’t as sharp-tongued anymore.”

When studying the Bible, I suddenly had so many questions which I had never experienced before. Now I want to dig deeper. Previously, the Holy Spirit had only occasionally led me to give a testimony. Now it happens daily. I don’t have to prepare a speech. God gives me the right words because only He knows the person I am speaking with. Although I sin at times, God gives me a clear awareness to see the sins. I can repent and change my ways.

I have come to realize that I can accomplish nothing without Jesus and that I need Christ’s presence every step of the way. I have also realized that the opposite of pride (how good I am, how well I can do something) is

humility, which shows us that without Jesus we can do absolutely nothing good.

God also gave me the strength to stop drinking coffee. Previously this would have been unthinkable, because when I tried to quit drinking coffee I had horrible headaches for five days. These are severe withdrawal symptoms. This time I didn't even think about what the consequences would be for me. I only knew that I didn't want to do it anymore. Today, I have no more desire for it.

I had a similar experience with meat. My family and I never wanted to abstain from eating meat. Today it is easy for me. I have no more desire for it.

The turning point in my life was the great desire for eternal life and realizing that nothing else is more important than my Redeemer, Christ Jesus, no matter the consequences.

Ezekiel 36:26,27 speaks the truth: Jesus will give us a new heart and a new spirit. He wants to make us into people who keep His commandments. For decades, I had struggled with different problems, but always in vain. I couldn't overcome them myself. Jesus wanted to accomplish His will in me, and He only needed my willingness.

Ellen White says that whoever tries to reach heaven with his own works by keeping the law, is trying an impossibility. This is exactly what I experienced for thirty-five years. Intellectually I agreed with the commandments, but I couldn't keep them. Only Jesus can accomplish that good in me. He gives us the desire for good and healthy things, and He removes our desire for harmful things.

Today I can confirm Romans 8:14: *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."* According to this verse, I have to ask daily, hourly, constantly for the Holy Spirit to live and work in me - because the devil doesn't sleep.

Jesus said in Matthew 10:37: *"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."* I had always thought: that just doesn't work. Now I know that when Jesus lives in my heart, then the great God of the whole universe works in me and through me and He can take care of my children and family much better than I ever could. Only God is all-powerful and all-knowing. With confidence I can place my life in His hands every day, and He will do everything right, according to His wisdom and His plan. M. M.

APPENDIX

Recommendation for further study

An important suggestion: Please read this booklet several times. Educational research has shown that it is necessary to read or hear a vital topic for our lives six to ten times before we can thoroughly understand it. Give it a try. The results will convince you. When I reread a particular booklet several times, I experienced for the first time in my life a fulfillment by the Holy Spirit. I have received many grateful and enthusiastic testimonies about growing in a Spirit-filled life with Jesus. Almost all of them were from readers who intensively reread the booklet multiple times

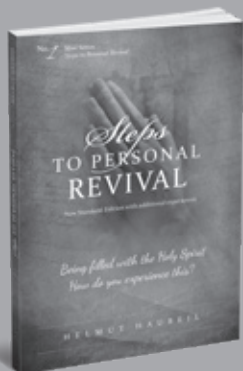
New experiences in Spirit-filled life

Our dear Lord Jesus said, *“He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the [Holy] Spirit.”* (John 7:38,39)

I have a request for you: When you have experiences through your surrender to Jesus and living in the Holy Spirit, then I would really appreciate it if you could send a short report to me, Helmut Haubeil. It is very valuable if we can share experiences on www.steps-to-personal-revival.info - testimonies -, in papers and newsletters. As a rule, we only mention the initials of the names. Please remember that your experience will strengthen others to begin or continue to grow in a Spirit-filled walk in commitment to Jesus Christ, our wonderful and soon-coming Savior.

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BOOK 1: www.steps-to-personal-revival.info

STEPS TO PERSONAL REVIVAL

Being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord himself has given the command:¹ Let yourselves be consistently and repeatedly filled anew with the spirit!²

1 E.G. White, *Mount of Blessing*, MB 20.3 (egwwritings.org)

2 Johannes Mager, *Auf den Spuren des Heiligen Geistes* (Lüneburg, 1999), p. 101

Order Information page 2

www.steps-to-personal-revival.info

FOREWORD FOR LEADERS AND FUTURE LEADERS MULTIPLYING THE RESULTS

CHAPTER 1: JESUS' MOST PRECIOUS GIFT

What did Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit?

Are you acquainted with Jesus' most powerful message?

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS THE CENTER OF OUR PROBLEMS?

Is there a spiritual cause to our problems? Is the cause a lack of the Holy Spirit?

What is the main problem with being a carnal Christian?

CHAPTER 3: OUR PROBLEMS ARE SOLVABLE

What is God's solution for our problems? How can we grow to be happy and strong Christians? What is the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER 4: WHAT DIFFERENCES CAN WE EXPECT?

What advantage do we have with a life filled with the Holy Spirit

What do we lose when we don't pray for the Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER 5: THE KEY TO PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

How can I implement and experience God's solution for me?

How should I pray so that I am sure of being filled with the Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER 6: WHAT EXPERIENCES LIE AHEAD OF US?

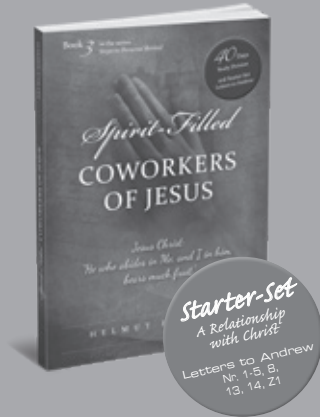
Personal experiences, as well as experiences from churches, a conference and a union

CHAPTER 7: INTEREST AND SHARING

The joy that we give returns to our own hearts. (German Proverb)

How can I help others to experience "Life in Abundance"?

How do we pass on the message? Which ways are there?



Spirit-Filled COWORKERS OF JESUS

Starter-Set: A Relationship with Christ
Letters to Andrew No. 1-5, 8, 13, 14, Z1

What does it mean to have success in life? What promises has God given us for a successful life? There is no strength in small plans. Our marvelous God wants us to think big. Do you want to be His coworker?

Jesus desires coworkers, who are filled with His love. Coworkers, through whom He can love others. Therefore, it is important that I experience the full extent of God's love myself. (see Ephesians 3:17).

What an ingenious concept God has for us with serving, giving and helping! It is simply unbelievable what God has prepared for us. And – how do we serve God? Are we working with our human abilities for God, or can God work with His divine abilities through us? What is the difference?

Jesus said: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19 NKJV) In what surprising way does Jesus make coworkers out of us?

Helmut Haubeil shares how he learned to lead people to Christ step by step. A personal relationship with Jesus is the most valuable relationship there is. How can I show this to others? What opening question can be used to tactfully and straightforwardly get to the main issue? What tried and tested tools are available that make it significantly easier for helpers and participants when talking about faith? These valuable tools are included in the Starter-Set.

Then a spiritual-missionary concept will be introduced, which shows how we as individuals or groups, as a church or conference can victoriously advance under God's leadership.

May God give each of us the joy of being Jesus' spirit-filled coworker!



EXPERIENCE GOD

Letters to Andrew

Starter-Set

*A Relationship
with Christ*
Letters to Andrew
Nr. 1-5, 8,
13, 14, Z1



STARTERSET – LETTERS TO ANDREW TO LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS

These letters to Andrew are the bridge to practical experience. These are tried and tested tools to lead people to Jesus. There are 12 advantages to use such a booklet, which are mentioned at chapter 7 in *Spirit-Filled Coworkers of Jesus*. They significantly facilitate important conversations about faith, both for the helper and the participant.

This envelope contains one copy of each of the required letters. The illustrated design and the appealing content will please you. You will be happy to pass them on. You need a set for every person you want to lead to Jesus. You will experience great joy when you have been able to lead someone to Jesus.

The envelope is intended for notes: when did I give which number?

The usual order for passing distribution is:

- 4 The bet of our life: Does God exist or not?
- 1 Christian Faith put to the test
- 8 Prophecies about Jesus Christ – Probability of Fulfilment 1:10¹⁷
- 2 Unique and beyond comparison: Jesus of Nazareth
- 3 What is the main focus of the Bible?
- 13 Seize Life through a personal relationship with God
- Z1 In addition: The Way to Eternal Life
- 14 Life in God's Strength – How?
- 5 Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol

www.steps-to-personal-revival.info: Letters to Andrew

The letters to Andrew can also be downloaded for free or be sent to someone from this website.

*„But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.“
1 Cor. 15:57*

I currently pastor two churches in California. I first became in contact with your material by listening to Pastor Dwight Nelson [see below] in his weekly podcast. It totally impacted my soul at first. I had heard about other Holy Spirit materials before, but I confess that I never had much to care about. I definitely believe that for some reason, God has chosen this current time to reach more people with the Holy Spirit. And I'm so glad I have found it from your efforts.

One thing I can witness to you. Right at the first chapter we are exposed in a simple way to very powerful truths which imposes our minds to stop and re-think. And the process of reading multiple times is very effective. To everybody whom I talk, discuss and preach about the book, the Holy Spirit subject becomes more and more attractive again. It's like we are hearing about it for the first time. I can see it in myself. I could not move out of the first chapter before preaching at least 3 sermons about the subject covered in it. I just don't know how to better explain, but I could not stop reading the book and the results of that were felt in my churches. I did spread out the voice and this last year, my district has shown a significant growth. All of that I attribute to God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit in our members. And we are looking for more to come at this new year! D.R. Jan. 2018 Excerpt

Pastor Dwight Nelson, Leading Pastor Pioneer Memorial Church – Andrews University, told, that this little book [Steps to Personal Revival] “changed the inside of me. I want to do the same for you”.

He preached a series of three sermons:

“Ground Zero and the New Reformation: How to be baptized with the Holy Spirit?”

He quoted from “Steps to Personal Revival” and recommended it. That led to thousands of downloads and order of books.

His personal testimony and the three sermons are at
www.steps-to-personal-revival.info

Abide in Jesus

Jesus Christ

Gospel of John Chapter 15:

Verses 4-5: *„Abide in me, and I will abide in you ... He who abides in me, and in whom I abide, bears much fruit.“*

Our dear Lord Jesus wants to grant us through divine-human cooperation an inspiring, succesful and victorious life.

Verse 7: *„If you abide in me and my words abide in you, then ask for what you want; it will be yours.“*

Our dear Lord Jesus takes our prayer life to a new level.

Verse 11: *„These things I have spoken to you, that my joy remain in you and that your joy may be full.“*

A life in intimate relationship to Jesus is a life of deep inner joy.

This booklet wants to show you the way to build up or to deepen a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is wonderful to trust Jesus.

The valuable and practical topics will enable you to develop or promote a truly meaningful, enduring and powerful life with him. You will find your relationship with Christ growing deeper and richer. It's the best relationship there is ever. And – it has a positive effect on our other relationships. Jesus also says to you:

*But I came to bring them life –
life in all its abundance*

John 10:10