

40 Days
Study Division
and Starter-Set
Letters to Andrew

Spirit-Filled
COWORKERS
OF JESUS

Jesus Christ:

*"He who abides in Me, and I in him,
bears much fruit."*

H E L M U T H A U B E I L

Publisher:

Original: „Geisterfüllte Mitarbeiter Jesu“
TOP Life Wegweiser-Verlag GmbH, Wien
Austrian Publishing House
Verlagsarchivnummer 050 320
1. Edition April 2020

Design and Production: Konrad Print & Medien, www.konrad-medien.de

Image credits: Simon Eitzenberger, www.desim.de

Translation from the 1st German edition: Holly Tarita

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Languages: German and English

Translations:

Arabic, Croatian, English, French, German (Original), Indonesia, Kirundi/Burundi-Ostafrika, Swahili/Tanzania-Kenia, Tagalog/Philippinen, Urdu/Pakistan.

Internet:

www.steps-to-personal-revival.info German: **www.schritte-zur-persoenlichen-erweckung.info**

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Contact

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Book 3

SPIRIT-FILLED COWORKERS OF JESUS

Important Prior Information

We are daring to break new ground with SPIRIT-FILLED COWORKERS OF JESUS. A STARTER-SET with tried and tested tools – called Letters to Andrew – is included. These have 12 advantages (p. 125), which make it significantly easier for helpers and participants when they want to help someone to a personal relationship with Jesus. The book explains in detail how to use these letters. (Also called booklets, brochures, tracts) When you try them out, you will be filled with joy. The two crucial steps in a contact are: Accompanying someone to accept Jesus (Letters to Andrew 13 – short: LA 13) and How to live in the power of the Holy Spirit (LA 14). After that a new motivation and strength to follow Jesus develops.

We want to trust in the Bible verse: But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57).

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Source of Life Publishing House

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Europe - Russian-language literature

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40 Days
Study Division
and Starter-Set
Letters to Andrew

Spirit-Filled
COWORKERS
OF JESUS

How do you become one?

HELMUT HAUBEIL

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This book contains a study page at the end each chapter: Personal thoughts and discussion helps + Our Prayer time. It also includes a 40-Days plan for groups who want to use it for 40-Days studies. A Starter-Set is also attached with tried and tested tools – called Letters to Andrew – to lead people to Jesus Christ.

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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! (Matthew 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*, p.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 is the connection between the three booklets in the *Steps to Personal Revival* series?

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 Coworkers with Jesus*

How can you become a Spirit-filled coworker?

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

Encouragement

Experience has shown that the study of these precious truths is particularly blessed, when two people follow the study plan and use it for their daily devotional time together. There is double blessing for couples! (With others it can also be done by telephone, Skype, etc.) Also, a daily or weekly discussion time and prayer in a group is very stimulating.

LIVE ENTHUSIASTICALLY AND VICTORIOUSLY THROUGH JESUS!

*How can I be successful as a Christian?
What promises does God give us for a successful life?*

What is success in life?

Everyone defines success differently. Most people think of money, influence, power and fame. Naturally, this can be referred to as a type of success, but isn't success in life a fulfilled life in a deeper sense?

In 1923 the nine richest men in the world at that time met in Chicago for a conference. No one knows exactly what they discussed. But 25 years later, someone investigated to see what had happened to them. Almost all of them were either bankrupt, on the run, in prison because of fraud or had died from a heart attack or suicide. They had been incredibly rich and had achieved great influence and power. But they didn't have true success in life – not even lasting economic success. Jesus said: “... *for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.*” (Luke 12:15 NKJV) (Taken from: “Helmut Haubeil & Gerhard Padderatz, *Gott, Geld & Glaube – Christliches Handeln in Wirtschaftsfragen*“ (God, Money & Faith – Christian conduct in economic matters), Eckental 2009, p. 15, 16).

They had overlooked something vital in their lives: a personal, intimate relationship with God; the Bible calls this “*being in Christ*” (170 times) or “*born again*” (John 3:1-17) or “*born of God*” (1 John 5:18). Christ lives in us, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit. God promises us “in Christ” success – namely **success in life**. He accompanies us on our journey through life. He assumes responsibility, when we remain closely and constantly connected to Him. In addition, He gives us His wonderful spiritual blessings and eternal life. E.G. White said: “A knowledge of this mystery [Christ in us] furnishes a key to every other. It opens to the soul the treasures of the universe, the possibilities of infinite development.” (*Education*, p. 172.1)

According to the world, success is based on self-determination: My ego determines almost everything. When we take this path, then we are personally responsible for the results. We have to deal with all the human problems and limitations. Yes, a person can temporarily experience success. And yet, this path ultimately ends in doom (Revelation 14:17-20).

God’s promises for success: We have a marvelous and ingenious God. Promises are prepared victories for us. Jesus said that He came to give us life abundantly. The Bible promises us true success, although this expression isn’t literally used. Please study the following passages:

- ▶ Psalm 1 shows: whoever takes God’s path, will “*be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.*”
- ▶ Joshua 1:7-9: “... *the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*” (more about this later)
- ▶ Proverbs 3:5-6: “*In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*”
- ▶ John 15:1-17: The New Testament speaks about “fruit”. In verse 5: “*He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit.*”

God and human beings constantly work closely together in this process.

A practical example of success

When I was 19 years old, I was extremely impressed by Daniel’s actions. The first chapter of the book Daniel impacted my whole life as a great blessing. This also applied to my career path, both in economics as well as pastoral / missionary work. Daniel, a prisoner of war, became a great statesman and

chancellor in two world empires and was God's prophet. Today, he is still highly revered by Christians, Muslims and Jews.

The Beginning of Daniel's Career

What kind of people were Daniel and his fellow captives? Chapter 1 reveals:

Verse 4: They were young, healthy, good looking, intelligent and wise and they came from devout homes. In addition, they were princes in the royal family. They came from Judea. They were hostages and prisoners of war.

Verse 5: The great King Nebuchadnezzar wanted to win these young people over. He wanted to particularly nurture them. He ordered that they be supplied with his food and wine. As a consequence, Daniel and his friends had a problem: The luscious and sumptuous food from the king's table contradicted the ordinances in the Bible. What should Daniel and his friends do? As hostages of war, they were completely dependent on the king's goodwill. Certainly, they thoroughly deliberated and consulted God. They had to make a decision: Either silently eat and drink what was placed before them – against their conscience – or search for a different alternative. We are only told about Daniel's decision, but they certainly all agreed.

Verse 8: *“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank.”* (NKJV) Daniel resolved to be faithful to God and not to eat any unclean foods. In the course of his life, we see that this was a fundamental decision for his whole life.

Daniel also didn't want to accept any “worldly offers” in the future, which would cause him to be unfaithful to God. He wanted to follow the biblical ordinances. Daniel was certainly acquainted with the book of Joshua and the commission, which God gave to Joshua! (A small tip: study Joshua 1:7-9 and learn it by heart!) A short version:

Verse 7: Always follow God's word. Don't stray to the right or left, SO THAT you will have success!

Verse 8: Constantly occupy yourself with God's word and act according to what is written, THEN you will have success!

Verse 9: Be confident and courageous! Don't be afraid of anything! BECAUSE God is with you wherever you go. He assumes the responsibility. He gives us the strength, joy and success.

This first decision already showed clearly that Daniel lived in complete surrender to God. **This is the key aspect for success in accordance with God: Always make decisions as God, in His love, wants and not as I want or as some authority suggests or dictates.**

How important are decisions in our life? The ability to make good decisions governs our whole life. The luxury passenger ship “Queen Elizabeth” was 1,300 times as heavy as its rudder, which steered the huge ship. Such a rudder is a parallel to our ability to make decisions. Decisions can have a great impact. When we decide to do God’s will and take the necessary steps, then He will provide us with the necessary help. Then He accompanies us. Then we experience continuous divine-human teamwork, whereby God assumes the responsibility. (More information in *Abide in Jesus*, chapter “Obedience through Jesus”).

Daniel and his friends made a decision according to God’s will. What steps did they take next? They did what they could and God provided a solution to the problem.

How can we deal best with difficult decisions?

Daniel 1 verse 8 b: “... he [Daniel] *requested* of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.” What method did they use? **The method of requesting.** It comes across in an entirely different way, when we express our concern as a request rather than saying: “I won’t do that!” or “I don’t want that!” or “That is out of the question!”. A request expresses trust. When we voice a request, the chances are higher that the person addressed will try to help us. But when we make demands or express a refusal in an unfriendly tone, then the contact person will be negatively influenced. They will be more inclined to show who has the final say. I learned this important perspective at a youth retreat and never forgot it. I have acted accordingly my whole life, because this is a good and correct method. It has stood the test of time.

Daniel also added something: He emphasized that this problem was a matter of conscience for him. When we reason this way, we will often be met with more understanding. But we should never and under no circumstance act against our conscience. Only in this way can we have inner peace with God.

Verse 9: “Now **God had brought** Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.” (NKJV) What happened here? Daniel made the

decision to obey God. In this way, he had done everything he could – carefully thought out and very politely. And then God intervened and moved the heart of this superior. God **brought it about**. (Normally, our marvelous God will intervene in our favor. But He can also decide otherwise. Maybe we haven't met all the conditions or maybe He has a superior perspective as to why He shouldn't do it.)

According to verse 10 the chief official had great concerns. If he were to fulfill Daniel's request, then he would be acting against the king's explicit decree.

We see Daniel's next step in verse 12. He turns to the steward, who personally supervised Daniel and his friends. And Daniel continues with the request method. In addition, he makes a specific suggestion – he had had time to think about this. He said very politely and friendly to the steward: Please try it out for ten days with us. With this request, he again shows his trust in his superior. One thing is clear: Daniel wasn't planning on eating unclean food after the ten days! On the contrary, he trusted completely in God's intervention as he requested: *“Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables [literally seed foods]¹ to eat and water to drink.”* (NKJV)

Why did Daniel request “seed foods”? Where does this term come from? It says in Genesis 1:29: *“And God said: See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.”* That's right, Daniel was well acquainted with God's word. He requested the best food, specifically the food, which God had designated for humans at creation: plant foods. It also has the advantage of being inexpensive. God **brought it about** that this steward also heard and granted his request. And again, God did something wonderful:

Verse 15 *“And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies.”* (NKJV) As a result, the problem was solved. What did God give them? **Beauty, strength and high intelligence. God brought it about!**

1 William H. Shea, *Das Buch Daniel, Teil 1* (Advent-Verlag Lüneburg, 1998), S. 52

But God continued to give: verse 17 – *“As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”* (NKJV) What else did God give them? **Knowledge and understanding** and in addition for Daniel, **the prophetic gift. God gave!**

But that’s not all. There was another surprise at the end of their training. We read in verse 20: *“And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.”* Can you make yourself five or ten times more intelligent? Only God can give this. God **gives**.

This method shows how you can lead a really successful life: If something contradicts God’s will, then make a decision **for** God’s will! Then carefully give it thought and then use the request method. Be polite and friendly. If possible or when necessary, suggest a reasonable solution, which concurs with God’s will. Then God is with us. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33 NIV: *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

Maybe you haven’t surrendered yourself completely to Christ yet. Or in the meantime, you have wandered away and lost your *“first love”* (Revelation 2:4). When we are in this condition, then we have a completely different attitude and see many things differently. And it seems “normal” to us. Romans 8:5 GNT: *“Those who live as their human nature tells them to, have their minds controlled by what human nature wants. **Those who live as the Spirit tells them to, have their minds controlled by what the Spirit wants.**”* This text shows us two different basic attitudes, depending on if we are filled with the Holy Spirit or not. When I hadn’t completely surrendered myself to Christ, I occasionally found it very strenuous and burdensome to live as a Christian. But now my life is filled with joy, assurance, strength and victory. E.G. White said: *“The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort.”* (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 509.1) That is why we want to contemplate basic questions in this book, which will through a close relationship with Christ lead us to success or in the biblical language, a fruitful life – a life as a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led coworker of God.

SPIRIT-FILLED COWORKERS OF JESUS

How do you become one?

*“You will not succeed in what you intend to do,
neither through human strength
nor through the might of an army:
No, my Spirit will do it!
I promise, the Lord God Almighty.”*

Zechariah 4:6 translated from the German version *Hoffnung für alle*

God’s work on this earth will not be completed through us in our own power and by our own abilities, however valuable they may be. **God Himself has to and will complete the gospel work.** He will do it through **Jesus’ Spirit-filled coworkers**; through men, women, the old, the young and children, who are filled with the Holy Spirit. Through people, who live in complete surrender to Christ and His service.

We have to ask ourselves the questions, which determine everything: Am I working for God with my human abilities? Or can God work through me with His divine abilities?

A Groundbreaking Experience (more chapter 3)

Theology students from our pastoral seminary in Bogenhofen, Austria were invited to hold evangelistic series in Africa. Among others, Zsolt Halmi volunteered for this effort. In 2006 he was in his second year of his studies. He

had previously held evangelistic series in Romania. He and other students were appointed to Kisumu, Kenya in East Africa.

Zsolt expected God to work mightily there, since he had heard great things about the people's interest in Africa. He expected thousands of attendees. He was supposed to speak at a market place. A podium had been built there. First, they showed the film about Jesus' life, then the sermon followed. But only 30 guests came. It was like a cold shower to Zsolt. Only 20 people came on the second evening and only 10 on the third evening. It continued this way the rest of the week. He was discouraged and the situation didn't improve. In his frustration, he locked himself in his room and prayed for four hours. He poured out his despair before God. He asked Him: "Why did you bring me here?" He surrendered himself to God with his whole being. He felt that He had deepened His relationship with God through this prayer. In addition, God had given him a promise at his request: "You will glorify the Lord." He realized that God had heard him. Nevertheless, he was still plagued by fears and doubts.

But – that evening 600 people came. Now he knew: God hadn't forsaken him. Then 700 people attended, then it went up to 1,000 and at the end by God's grace 39 people were baptized.

Can you see the distinct difference between working for God in our own power and God working through us with His love and His divine abilities? This is an extraordinary example. But I hope that we can clearly see the turning point. What changed? The same man spoke, with the same education, with the same message, with the same concept, with the same technique and in the same place. What changed? Nothing at all, except the degree of his relationship with God. He had surrendered himself fully to God. Our full surrender, that is God's criterion. And – there is only this one, there is no other. Our wonderful Lord wants to be connected with us with all His love and all His divine possibilities. – We will deal with this question in detail in chapter 3.

Rivers of Living Water – Greater Works

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 Spirit ...***" (John 7:38-39 NKJV)

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." (John 14:12 NKJV)

Why will rivers of living water flow from His disciples? Why will His disciples also do the works that he does and even greater works? Jesus states the reason: "... because I go to My Father." What happened when He went to His Father?

1. Jesus was reenthroned in power and glory. *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."* (Matthew 28:18 NKJV)
2. As a sign of His enthronement Jesus gave the disciples His greatest gift: He sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Jesus' crowning gift. That means: Jesus Himself has to and will do the greater works and give the rivers of living water – through disciples filled with the Holy Spirit.

Working for God in our own strength only brings human results. I doubt that it ever sufficed. But in our time and age, in which the majority of people have become hard of hearing towards God, it is certainly even less inadequate.

God's work will be completed by God Himself, by HIM working through those, who have completely surrendered themselves to HIM. This brings divine results. For example, Jesus, Paul, Daniel, Nehemiah, Esther and others.

Jesus' Keywords for His Disciples

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)
How can this be done?

"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19 NKJV)
When we follow Jesus in all things, then He makes us into fishers of men. There is not a more successful master. We will look more closely at how He makes us into fishers of men in chapter 5.

What did He say to them later? Were they supposed to start immediately after His ascension?

"... He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, ... you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. ..." (Acts 1:4-5 NKJV)

What were Jesus' last words during His time on earth?

“But you shall receive power [empowerment, equipped] when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ... to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8 NKJV)

What were His last words from heaven to the last church?

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Revelation 3:22 NKJV)

Jesus' focal point here is clearly discernable: Under all circumstances, we need the Holy Spirit.

... then the end will come

When all nations have been reached, then Jesus will come again: *“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”* (Matthew 24:14 NKJV)

The gospel has been spread with great dedication – and this has worked. But the ultimate goal **cannot** be reached in human power!

Modern media has helped us in recent times. Will the work be completed through this medium? Interestingly enough, communication technologies started with Samuel Morse in the year 1844. Can we see evidence with this date that technology will play a role? Definitely! But, we shouldn't forget that the Lord only makes the Bible alive for the listeners, when the words are spoken by disciples, who are dedicated to God and filled with the Holy Spirit.

What needs to happen so that the goal is reached and the whole world hears and understands the gospel? Let's read God's clear and vital words in Zechariah 4:6:

*“You will not succeed in what you intend to do, neither through human strength nor through the might of an army: **No, my Spirit will do it!** I promise, the Lord God Almighty.”* (translated from the German version *Hope for Everyone*)

This has always been true. And yet, it is even more important today. At the end of the world, similar circumstances to the time of Noah will prevail (Matthew 24:37-39). What was mankind's main problem back then? Wickedness! (Genesis 6:5-6) Since human wickedness – meanwhile disguised and packaged well – has increased dramatically; we need empowerment from God in these times more urgently than ever before.

Where does the power and ability come from?

Jesus said: *“But you shall receive power [empowerment, equipped] when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ...”* (Acts 1:8 NKJV) Jesus refers to a supernatural power – God’s power.

Let’s compare it to the power of electricity. With this power, we can illuminate, heat, cool and run many devices and motors, for example, computers, internet, radios, TVs, telephones, trains, electric cars and much more. Even when the seeds in the earth sprout, electricity plays a role. Energy is the foundation for everything. Everything takes place through the power of electricity.

So, the foundation of our life and service is Christ in us through the Holy Spirit and the resulting power of God. Only this way can we be God’s witnesses – through our words and actions. The Holy Spirit and Christ in us are the prerequisites so that Jesus can reach people through us. During our time of training with Jesus, we will become His messengers of joy through Jesus’ leadership and guidance and be filled by the supernatural power of God.

What did Jesus clearly point out in his farewell address?

The Holy Spirit represents Jesus

“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.” (John 16:7 NKJV)

This means: **Jesus left. The Holy Spirit came in His place. Since then He has been here.**

The Holy Spirit represents Jesus here on this earth. Jesus explained that this solution is better for us, than if He would have personally stayed.

Jesus lives in us through the Holy Spirit

“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” (John 14:16-18 NKJV)

In other words: **The Holy Spirit brings the presence of Jesus into our lives** (Ephesians 3:16-17). Jesus can live in us through the Holy Spirit – no matter where we are.

The Holy Spirit is our teacher

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” (John 14:26 NKJV)

Meaning: **The Holy Spirit teaches us Jesus’ truth.** We need the Holy Spirit so that we can know the truth and differentiate it from error or enticement.

Through the Holy Spirit Jesus testifies of Himself in me and through me

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” (John 15:26 NKJV)

In other words:

Jesus bears witness of Himself in our lives through the Holy Spirit. And: The Holy Spirit imparts through us the testimony of Jesus to other people.

The Holy Spirit deepens my relationship with Jesus and makes it more cordial.

The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus

“He [the Holy Spirit] will glorify Me, for he will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.” (John 16:14 NKJV)

That is, the Holy Spirit reveals the majesty and glory of the risen Christ and unveils the mysteries of the plan of salvation. Thus through the Holy Spirit leading step by step, Jesus becomes greater in my life; He will be nearer, lovelier, more precious, more meaningful: Jesus will become my everything.

As a consequence, what is the valuable result?

*“I have come that they may have **life**, and that they may have it **more abundantly**.”* (John 10:10 NKJV)

*“...**‘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, whom those believing in Him would receive. ...’**”* (John 7:37-39)

Do you want more from life – a fulfilled life? Everyone longs for this, because our gracious God *“has put eternity in their hearts”*

(Ecclesiastes 3:11 NKJV). When you long for this, then Jesus will show you the way. He wants us to have a fulfilled life here and now. After His second coming, we can continue this life in a completely different dimension in God's eternal kingdom. When Jesus lives in us through the Holy Spirit, then we will experience life in abundance (John 10:10; Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 2:9-10).

In other words: **Jesus gives us an abundant life through the Holy Spirit.**

Can our gracious Lord give us even more? The Holy Spirit is not only Jesus' crowning gift for His disciples, which brings all the other gifts, but rather the Holy Spirit Himself is also the giver of gifts. I don't want to live without this intimate relationship anymore! Do you want it as well?

How did Jesus work?

"Morning by morning he communicated with his Father in heaven, receiving from him daily a fresh baptism (infilling) of the Holy Spirit." (E.G. White, *Signs of the Times*, November 21, 1895, par. 3)

First of all, Jesus sought the presence of the Father and then went filled with the Holy Spirit and under His guidance to the people.

*"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me". There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort." (E.G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.3)*

Jesus was filled with God's love through the Holy Spirit and did His best under the Spirit's guidance to help people in their personal distress. In this way, He won their confidence and His invitation to follow Him fell on well-prepared ground.

May our marvelous God help us all to become loving, efficient and Spirit-filled coworkers of Jesus and to continually grow therein.

How to pray for the fulfillment of the Holy Spirit, to be sure that you have received, is dealt with in detail and practically in *Steps to personal Revival* – look at p. 205

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What is the result of efforts in God's work done in your own strength?*

2. *Why were the disciples supposed to wait in Jerusalem after Jesus' ascension? What did they do during this time?*

3. *What does the Holy Spirit achieve in us with regard to our fellowmen?*

4. *What are the results when we are filled with the Holy Spirit?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... that God will show us where we are still trying to work for Him in our own strength.
 2. ... for patience and endurance in letting God prepare you to be His instrument.
 3. ... that we learn to increasingly know and love Jesus more.
 4. ... for an open heart to ask and receive the Holy Spirit.

GOD LOVES YOU!

*How can I experience the fullness of God's love?
What role does my trust in God play?*

An unparalleled Revelation: GOD IS LOVE

How do we know that God is truly love, that His character is love? God revealed this to us in a unique way – through the life and death of His Son Jesus Christ, who said: “... *He who has seen Me has seen the Father. ... Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.*” (John 14:9-10 NKJV)

So, God is like Jesus.

The Bible tells the following about Jesus, when He lived here on this earth: He was trustworthy, because mothers gladly brought their children to Him; although He was poor, He shared everything He had with others; He healed the sick; He made no distinction of persons; He encouraged the despondent; He always took time, when someone needed His help – even in the night people came to Him and He helped anyone interested find eternal life. For this purpose, He had to suffer death as a substitute for every repentant sinner.

The Bible says:

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.” (John 15:13 NKJV)

Actually, Jesus did something even greater! **He died** for us **while we** were still **His enemies**: “... *that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*” (Romans 5:8 NKJV)

He endured contempt and dreadful physical suffering for you and me. Why did He die earlier than those who were crucified with Him? He died earlier because of the burden of sin, because of your and my sin. It is simply unbelievable what a sacrificial, selfless and wonderful love He showed and still shows toward us!

The Matchless Love of God

What is singular about God is that **not only does He have love, but rather He Himself is love**. What is the difference between having something and being something? Something that I have, can be lost or absent. Something that I am, is always existent in me. Since **God is love**, He **can only act out of love, even when it often doesn't look like it at the moment**. There is an enormous difference – in relation to our thinking and actions – between us sinful, erring humans and our all-powerful, all-knowing and omnipresent God!

God's love (Greek: agape) **is the noblest and deepest kind of love that exists**. This love has its foundation in God's character. It is not based on whether the recipient of this love is deserving (example: the love of the father for the prodigal son).

We find how this love expresses itself in detail in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV. *“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”*

And since God is eternal, **this wonderful love is also eternal!**

The Human Capacity for Love was Weakened by Sin

Sin has disfigured the image of God in humans and thereby also negatively affected their capacity for love. The further a person lives apart from God, the less capable he is of love and the more his egoistic nature manifests itself.

Someone once described human love this way: I love you, so that you love me back. This seems to be true in many cases today. A small child very quickly realizes that the more often he is nice to Grandma, the more often he gets some sweets!

Sinful humans are only capable of imperfect love. How wonderful that God wants to put His perfect love in our hearts!

God's Goodness is His Love in Action

Evidently, John never had the problem of doubting God's perfect love – rather on the contrary. He experienced Jesus' life and death. That is why he wrote: *“And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love. ...”* (1 John 4:16 NKJV)

God's character is love. His nature is love. His love determines all His actions. That is why all of His laws have originated under the influence of love. God has made the fullness of His love – this indescribable blessing – available to all of His creatures. He wants to demonstrate His goodness to everyone; **His goodness, which is His love in action.** God's goodness is His helpful actions, which are determined by love. The word goodness implies: being good, willingness to help, friendliness and compassion. To put it another way: God's goodness is giving, imparting and acting love.

Life in the Middle of God's Love

A father took a trip on the ocean with his son and wanted to explain God's love to him. He said to his son: “Look as far as you can over the bow of the ship and then over the stern – that is how long God's love is. And now look as far as you can to the left and then to the right. That is how wide God's love is. Now look up into the endless heavens – that is how high God's love is. Look down into the depths of the ocean – that is how deep God's love is.” After a few moments the boy said very happily: “Papa, do you know what the best part of that is? We are in the middle!” – Let's translate that to our spiritual lives and ask ourselves: When are we in the middle of God's love? In other words:

How can we experience the fullness of God's love or His goodness?

The apostle Paul knew the answer. Please pay attention to the three steps he showed us:

1. Power through His Spirit
2. Christ dwells in us through faith
3. Rooted in His love

The result:

You can grasp the magnitude of His love.

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ." (Ephesians 3:16–18 NIV)

We can personally experience the complete fullness of God's love and His goodness, when Christ lives by faith in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, when we have a personal relationship with Him. And the closer this relationship to Jesus is, the more a person grows in his surrender to Jesus, the more he will experience the fullness of God's love!

In regards to God's love, I have often prayed: "Father, please let me better discern your love, your character and your gracious nature." To my great delight, I have observed that God has time and again given me new insights about His love and also in this regard new experiences. And my relationship with Him has become more intimate. We are often not aware of the marvelous love and goodness, with which our heavenly Father pursues and surrounds us.

He says to you and me: *"Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."* (Jeremiah 31:3 NKJV)

Maybe you have detected completely different aspects of God's love than I have; but one thing is certain: We are dealing with a topic here that we will be occupied with for eternity!

Is it even important to understand God's character?

Is it really necessary that I have a correct perception of God's character? The answer is: Yes, it is actually extremely important! Here is the explanation: God asks me to surrender the leadership of my life to Him. God asks

me to completely trust Him, yes, to bind my complete existence on Him. God asks me to do everything His word says. Nevertheless, I would only do this, if I find God trustworthy, loveable and understanding. Only when I have the right understanding of God's wonderful character, will I be willing to surrender and commit myself. It is that way to a great extent in the western world. Many other people simply trust God's love.

Day 4

Why do some people have a completely wrong perception of God?

The Austrian poet, Peter Rosegger, had the impression as a child that his father was very strict. One day he did something naughty. Because he was afraid his father would punish him, he hid in a large clock case in the living room. He could see through a crack and saw how his father came into the room and asked his servants to look for him. After they had left, his father started to cry. Peter couldn't stand it any longer and came out of the clock case. The father didn't even think of punishing him. Later Peter Rosegger wrote: "From then on I knew that my father wasn't too strict." From that moment, he knew what his father's heart was like!

Don't a lot of people think just like Peter Rosegger did about his father – that he was too strict?! Some of us simply apply the picture we have of our earthly father to our heavenly Father. In most cases this is naturally wrong.

Question: Where did the false perception of God and His character originate? Answer: in heaven. Lucifer was the first to falsely assess God's character and present it to others incorrectly. To this day the evil ones endeavor to persuade people in every possible way to think badly about God's character.

Caution with the Master of Deception!

Satan has misled some to believe that God possess the evil characteristics, which in reality he himself has. By spreading the false teaching of eternal agony in hell, he has managed to bring some Christians to see God as a vengeful tyrant. As a result, he has succeeded in convincing many people in the church to not want to listen anymore and they prefer to occupy themselves with a philosophy, such as atheism, which explains God away. For easy-going people, who want to believe without their own Bible study in the love of God, Satan uses another tactic: God is so loving that we can do

anything we want – in the end He will save everyone. (Salomon knew for a fact that God would in the end hold everyone accountable! Ecclesiastes 11:9) Satan tries to persuade the fearful that a Christian life is difficult, hard and joyless. (John said exactly the opposite! 1 John 5:3) He has a seemingly logical argument for the rich – they would have to give up much more than they would ever gain if they followed Jesus. (But we know that Paul had a completely different experience! Philippians 3:4) Satan encourages the superficial to think that God is too particular and fussy (Yes, God should be very generous with them, but for those that have harmed them, He should meticulously pay them back!) And Satan has led still others to think that the evolution theory appears plausible. He has influenced others to believe that God is only a weak, old man and is not to be taken seriously.

Satan repeatedly contrives something new to arouse a false conception of God in people’s minds or to eliminate God from their thoughts. He knows exactly that: whoever doesn’t know or appreciate God’s true character, will hardly want anything to do with God. And that is exactly where he wants to have them.

Roger Morneau wrote: “‘Demons love to play games with the minds of humans,’ a spiritist priest told me during my days as a spirit worshipper. ‘They flash thoughts and images in people’s minds with such delicate skill that the recipients believe them to be their own reasoning.’” (*When you need incredible answers to prayer*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1995, p. 70)

Satan and his demons try to manipulate the thoughts of those, who claim to be Christians, so that by their wrong thoughts and actions they falsely or insufficiently portray God’s character

A very Effective Temptation Device

Satan wants to seduce as many people as possible! Not without reason did **Jesus clearly warn about the seduction**, which His followers would experience **in the end times**.

The internet is an especially effective device to seduce people. No one can control the internet! In this way the evil one can strongly influence thoughts and actions, especially of young people. For example, a teenager can **at any time look at anything that interests him** in the internet. The parents basically have no control over it. What interests the most teenagers, when

they are amongst themselves? The film industry has known it a long time: sex and violence. Unfortunately, not only teenagers are susceptible to these topics, but many adults as well. We need to constantly ask ourselves: Where am I in danger of being seduced by Satan?

God's Love and our Freedom

Our heavenly Father has inextricably linked His love with freedom. True love can only be completely expressed in freedom. Freedom is such a valuable asset for God that He **gave all His creatures** – the angels, inhabitants of other planets and us humans – **freedom**. We can decide **for or against God**. However, it also includes accepting the consequences for our decisions. So, the person that decides against God, has to bear the negative consequences themselves; and unfortunately, other people are also affected by the negative consequences

God's Love and His Justice

Because God is love, He will always deal justly. In His love God cannot accept that someone is cheated, beaten, raped or impaired in any other way. Hence, everyone, who has not repented of their wrong, will in the end have to **carry the guilt of their own sins**. God's love places only the wrong a person has done on them. Each person determines their own measure. Since God loves sinners too, He would much rather see the sinner repent and let himself be saved. But when **the sinner** rejects the offer of salvation, then according to the Bible he will receive the "wages" for his sin: "*For the wages of sin is [final] death.*" (Romans 6:23 NIV)

It is also in accordance with **God's justice** that at the end of time the **faithful** are rewarded with **eternal life** (Revelation 22:12). They have accepted the offer of salvation: **Jesus has in their stead** taken the **punishment** for their sins **on Himself** (Isaiah 53:5).

Since God doesn't usually punish a person immediately when they sin, some people become bolder and over time sin even more. However, an unrepentant sinner has to bear the negative consequences of his actions during his lifetime. Sometimes, these negative consequences are hardly discernable or perceptible to this person, but they are always there.

God's Love and the Suffering in this World

When talking about this topic, people have a lot of questions. Suffering is a result of sin. But how sin could even come into existence in Lucifer is an absolute mystery for us. Lucifer – now called the devil or Satan – is by all means the cause of all suffering. And God is allowing him a certain degree of freedom for a certain time, so that everyone can see the consequences of sin. However, when the measure is full – and in my opinion it has almost reached that point – then Jesus will come and end all the suffering on earth. Based on their knowledge of where sin led, the saved will never again have the wish to sin. Then, there will again be unity, harmony and love in the whole universe. (For more information on the subject: E.G. White, *The Great Controversy*, chapter 29 “The Origin of Evil”)

Suffering Injustice – Doing Wrong

There is a lot of injustice in this world because of sin. We usually have a lot to say about the topic of suffering injustice, since we often feel affected. We would prefer it, if God would always immediately intervene before any injustice happened to us. But then, the person, who wanted to do the injustice, could accuse God of taking away their freedom. That is why God only very, very seldomly intervenes directly. He alone knows when He **has** to act in order to prevent something worse from happening. (Example: Punishment of Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16). Only at the end of time will the faithful witness that: ***“The LORD executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.”*** (Psalms 103:6 NKJV)

In general, we concern ourselves less with the topic of doing wrong. And usually, a Christian is more likely to suffer injustice than to do wrong. But let's briefly think about what happens to us when we do wrong. Firstly, our conscience is burdened. Our conscience gives us a “signal” that we are on the wrong path. This “signal” should prompt us to repent. But when we don't confess and forsake the sin, it will have a negative effect on our character. Furthermore, God's peace leaves our hearts. And often the “sins of the parents” are passed on to their children.

Responding to Saving Love and Staying in it

A wonderful path is open to us, namely to respond to God's saving love right now. *"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts ..."* (Hebrews 3:15 NKJV) **When we accept Jesus as our Savior and remain with Him**, then we may be certain that He has freed us from our guilt: *"Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness ..."* (1 Peter 2:24 NKJV)

The apostle John wrote: *"God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him."* (1 John 4:16 NKJV) The more intimate our relationship with Jesus is, the happier, the more satisfied and the more thankful we will be! And when we thank God, it always has a positive effect on us and our character. We are even influenced by our own words (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 322-323). But not only that – we are also influenced by what we see and hear. *"By beholding we become changed."* (E.G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 459.1) This is why it is good when we under the influence of the Holy Spirit daily read the crucifixion story in the Bible and contemplate on it.

When we abide in Christ, we will no longer wantonly sin. But should we accidentally or unknowingly commit a sin, then 1 John 2:1 applies: *"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."* (NKJV)

When we have Jesus, then we can say with Paul: *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. ... For the law of the Spirit [the life-giving influence of the Holy Spirit] of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death."* (Romans 8:1-2 NKJV)

This being-in-Christ means abiding in Him. This expression is found in the New Testament 170 times – 97 of those are in Paul's writings. It is a different expression for being born again. Jesus said in John 3:5: *"... unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he [= how someone is by nature] cannot enter the kingdom of God."* (NKJV)

Let's summarize: Whoever responds to God's saving love day by day, will experience changes in their life and in the quality of their life, which they never knew before, and will in the end receive eternal life. I see this as the royal road of God's love. His love wants to bless us daily and ultimately save us!

God's Love Passes Every Test!

Most of us are acquainted with the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32. One day, the younger son goes to his father (who symbolizes God) and tells him that he wants to leave home and live his own life. Evidently, his father's rules and regulations (God's commandments) didn't suit him. Before the son left, he demanded his inheritance, which he wasn't even entitled to at this time. Nevertheless, the father gave him his share. The father gave him complete freedom, because he loved him. (This is the way God behaves with us.)

The son went to a faraway place. He did anything he liked there. He spent his money on wild parties and loose women. When his money was almost gone, his "circle of friends" quickly became smaller. Eventually, he had nothing left. Then, to make matters worse, a famine hit the region where he was. In order to survive, he had to get a job. The only position he found was as a swineherd. Reluctantly, he took the job. Hunger often tormented him, but he wasn't even allowed to eat the pig feed. During this hardship he thought about his life with his father and came to the following conclusion: All my father's workmen have more than enough to eat and I am dying of hunger here. I will go to him and say: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."* (verses 18-19 NKJV) (When we are sorry that we have sinned against our heavenly Father and we tell Him that, this is called "repentance" and "confession" in the Bible.) He started his trip back to his father with mixed feelings. The father already recognized his son at a great distance. Evidently, the father had been longingly watching for him. (Our heavenly Father waits with longing in the hope that we will no longer go our own ways, but rather come back to Him!) Full of compassion the father ran towards his son, fell on his neck and kissed him, although his son was quite dirty and smelled unpleasant. The son couldn't even get his whole confession out, before the father called his servants. He told the servants to bring the best clothes and to prepare a feast. Clearly, the father loved his son just the same as before. (God loves unconditionally! This love passes every test!) But that doesn't help us if we don't live with him. The father couldn't do anything for him when he wasn't with him; even if he was sick or had big problems.

When is God's love of importance to me?

What caused the son to all at once appreciate his father's love? It was only when he realized how good he had had it at home, that he wanted to go back to his father. The crisis brought him to his senses. Through his "hard life" his insolent attitude gave way to a realistic attitude. He saw that his alleged friends had "loved" his money instead of him. But his father had always treated him with love, even when he had given him a cold shoulder.

And I am certain that after his father had received him with such love, that he never thought of going away again.

Now, his father could show him his complete love. Only **now** was the son open to this love. Previously, the father had had to hold back his tokens of love, because the son had always been dismissive. But now there was nothing in the way of an intimate relationship between father and son!

When I completely open myself to God, when I confess my guilt and commit my life to Him, then I can experience the complete fullness of His love!

Only a person, who humbles himself before God and realizes that he doesn't deserve to be loved by God (just as the younger son did when he returned home), can be a true son or daughter of God. Only those, who commit their lives to the Father, will in the end receive their inheritance – eternal life.

Praying for Love

What should I do, if I sense only very little love for God and my neighbor? Well, we can pray for anything, including praying that we receive more love for God and our neighbors. Our prayer could go something like this: "Dear Father, please help me to love you with my whole heart, with my whole being, with all my emotions and with all my strength. Please work in me to will and to do according to your good pleasure in this matter. I also want to be able to love my fellow humans more. And also help me to be able to love myself. Thank you that I can experience your complete love. Make me a channel of your love for my surroundings. Amen." (We can pray that God enables us to fulfill Matthew 22:37, 39!)

Education, Wrath and Judgement

Every person that commits themselves to God, will be educated by Him. Our **education** is an important matter to God. It is an **attribute of His love** that He enrolls us in His “school”. He wants to make loveable, capable and independent people out of us, although the kind of educational measures He uses, depends largely on how well we learn. When we think of young Samuel, he was from the start certainly a very good student in God’s eyes. Because he trusted God, he was eager to learn and was obedient to his “teacher” Eli, before any unpleasant educational measures were necessary. This had a very positive effect on him and his environment. The Bible says: *“But Samuel ministered before the Lord. ... And the child Samuel grew in stature, and in favor both with the Lord and men.”* (1 Samuel 2:18,26 NKJV) In contrast, Eli’s own sons were not obedient students: *“Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father. ...”* (1 Samuel 2:25 NKJV) And thus it happened that they came to a bad end. They incurred God’s wrath due to their sacrilegious priestly ministry.

Another **attribute of God’s love** is **His wrath**. At first that may sound strange, but we need to remember that God’s wrath isn’t equivalent to human wrath. Our ego usually plays a crucial role in human wrath. On the other hand, God’s wrath is generally directed towards sin or sinful behavior (Romans 1:18), because what sin brings about is horrible.

A further **attribute of God’s love** is that He **judges every person justly**. Only He is capable of doing this, because He knows everything about everyone. David already knew that: *“God is a just judge.”* (Psalm 7:11 NKJV) And: *“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.”* (Psalms 97:2 NKJV)

Each of us has the possibility of doing anything we like. But the Bible warns us: *“Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all. For God will bring every work into judgement, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 NKJV) Since most people in this day and age don’t heed this warning, there is a lot of suffering in this world. Jesus knew things would turn out this way and therefore foretold about our time: *“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”* (Matthew 24:12 NKJV) In difficult times, the knowledge that God’s justice will triumph in the end, fortifies us.

Support during stormy times: God's law – a law of love

Many people live without God; they consider themselves the measure of all things. That is why more and more values are lost today. Standards, which were once valid, have been forgotten. As a result, more and more people are losing their hold on life and are becoming psychologically ill or end their own lives, because everything appears meaningless. We need something stable and reliable for our life; we need standards and trustworthy regulations. The poet, Matthias Claudius, said it this way: "People need something solid, where they can lay at anchor. Something that doesn't depend on them, but rather something they can depend on." (Matthias Claudius, Edition Steinkopf, 1982, p. 10)

Who, if not our Creator, knows best what rules are good for us! The Bible not only says that God is the only one, who can determine, what is right and good for us (Psalms 99:4), but also says that His rules are unparalleled and will last for eternity: *"All His precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness."* (Psalms 111:7-8 NKJV)

Every believer of every age has had a positive relationship to God's law. Let's take David for example; he made many interesting statements about God's law: *"The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul."* (Psalms 19:7 NIV) *"The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces."* (Psalms 119:72 RSV) *"If thy law had not been my delight, I should have perished in my affliction."* (Psalms 119:92 RSV) On one hand, God's law is an expression of His love, and on the other hand, according to Paul: *"... love is the fulfillment of the law."* (Romans 13:10 NKJV)

The new Commandment: Love like Jesus

Jesus gave His disciples – and through them also us, who believe – a new commandment. He said: *"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 NKJV)

Jesus calls us, indeed He commands us, to love *"as I have loved you"*. That means that we should have the same love as Jesus. What kind of love is meant here? It is the kind of love that the Father shows to His Son, Jesus Christ. It is the kind of love that the Son demonstrated on the cross when He died for us. God has made this divine, unconditional, unselfish and

eternally unchanging love available to us through the Holy Spirit in Christ. The Bible says clearly: "... *the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit ...*" (Romans 5:5 NKJV; see also Ephesians 3:16-17) In other words: When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are simultaneously filled with God's love.

So, loving like Jesus means: loving with divine love (agape). Ellen White said quite a bit about this – here are three short quotes: "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 [everyone, who is not filled with the Holy Spirit, has one] cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found." (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 551.2) "You need a daily baptism of the love that in the days of the apostles made them all of one accord." (*Counsels for the Church*, p.175.3). Daily asking for and receiving the Holy Spirit leads to a simultaneous baptism of love – being filled with God's love. "By putting on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, ninety-nine out of a hundred of the troubles which so terribly embitter life might be saved." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 348.3)

Without Love Everything is Nothing!

At first glance, this statement seems to be somewhat exaggerated. But when we take a look at 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, then we will quickly realize that the statement is true: "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.*" (NKJV) What can we learn from this? Only when our actions are governed by love, is it worthwhile in the eyes of God. The following poem points in the same direction:

Without Love Something Essential is Missing!

Obligation	without love	is fretful,
Responsibility	without love	is inconsiderate
Justice	without love	is severe,
Truth	without love	is critical,
Education	without love	is stubborn,
Intelligence	without love	is sly
Friendliness	without love	is two-faced,
Order	without love	is petty,
Expertise	without love	is opinionated,
Honor	without love	is proud,
Possessions	without love	is miserly
Faith	without love	is fanatical.

(Author unknown)

We can see that without love – divine love is meant – our actions and existence can basically only bring unsatisfactory results.

It is crucial that **everything we do, is done out of love to God and our neighbor**. We will be able to do this, if Christ lives in our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

It is also important **that we** grow in love through God’s character of love.

Love in the deepest Dimension

The greatest need of man is to love and be loved. The relationship between God and a believer is compared to a good marriage in the Bible (Isaiah 54:5; Ephesians 5:32). What denotes a good marriage here on this earth? The partners try to make each other happy, they spend as much time as they can together, they talk about everything that touches their hearts, they repeatedly reassure each other how much they love each other and there is an exchange of affection.

There is a relationship that everyone can have – whether married or not – which goes deeper than a marriage relationship between a man and woman. It is my relationship to my Redeemer and God: to Jesus Christ! I can experience through Jesus the greatest possible security, helpfulness and the deepest love. He is absolutely trustworthy and selfless. Jesus never disappoints me! His love is unchanging! He has time for me day or night. I don’t need any technical aids to communicate with Him. No problem is

too great for Him – He always has a solution prepared for me. He shows me in His word how much He loves me! He engaged the best bodyguards for my personal protection; I am looking forward to the day when I can meet these angels! And because Jesus loves me, He wants me to soon be with Him forever! He paid the highest price for my “change of residence” and has already prepared an extraordinary mansion for me. He cries for me, when I harm myself! And He is looking forward to finally taking me into His arms, when I am one day with Him in the New Jerusalem!

Can you imagine a greater love than this?! I can't!

Love and Faithfulness belong together

Did you know that God is jealous sometimes? Yes, you read that correctly! In the book of Nahum 1:2 it says: “**God is jealous ...**” (NKJV)

The question is what makes Him jealous? An answer is in Ezekiel 16. It is worthwhile to read the whole chapter in context. I have singled out verses 8 and 15: “... ‘Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine [Jerusalem = God’s people],’ says the Lord God. ... But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it.” (NKJV)

We see here what makes God jealous: namely when His children engage in **spiritual harlotry**. But we have to realize that **God’s jealousy** is different than human jealousy. It is the same as with God’s wrath. The motives for His jealousy and His wrath are absolutely noble and **completely selfless**. He is **concerned about our protection!** He wants us to thrive. Through His jealousy, He **wants to protect** us from running after other gods. He knows that it would only harm us. Present-day gods can be, for example: my favorite singer, my car, my house, my career, my hobby – anything I love more than God.

By letting us know that He jealously watches over us, He wants to show us that the relationship with us means a lot to Him! He would be very sad to lose us.

Our God wants us to “keep our spiritual marriage pure”.

Imagine, if a man said to his wife after a year of marriage: “Although we are married, as of now I will be somewhere else two days a week.” Understandably, his wife isn’t likely to accept this!

And God also can't accept it, when we don't keep our "marriage promise". He is faithful to us and expects the same from you and me. (Baptismal vows!) He longs for our undivided love. That is why the Bible's message is so clear: **Be completely His**, or let it be!

God's love is a blessing for all people

There is a general blessing for everyone. Everyone receives blessings corresponding to their behavior. When someone works diligently, he won't go hungry as a rule. When someone leads an honest lifestyle, he will enjoy the trust of many people. When someone is helpful, he will be appreciated. These natural blessings apply to all people, regardless if they are believers or not.

We know from experience – and the Bible confirms this – that God lets the sun rise over good and bad people, that He lets it rain over the just and the unjust and that He lets food grow for everyone, which we unfortunately do not distribute fairly. In addition, the Holy Spirit follows every person in order to encourage them to surrender their lives to Jesus. God wants to save as many people as possible!

Besides these general, natural blessings for all people, there are **special, supernatural blessings**, which God can only give "**His children**". They are the ones, who have surrendered their lives to Jesus and commit themselves daily to Him!

Each person decides for himself, whether he receives only the general blessing of God or the general **AND** special, supernatural blessing of God. Love is always tied to a person. There is no love without a relationship. What type of relationship is relevant here? The Bible compares our relationship with God through Jesus Christ to marriage. Jesus is the extremely lovely and faithful partner. So life in the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19) depends on whether I have entrusted my life to Jesus. If I do not trust myself to Him or have not stayed in this relationship, I am rejecting His affection and love and special, supernatural blessing at the same time.

We can read in the Bible what these special blessings are:

- ▶ The coronation gift of Christ, which brings all other blessings with it, the Holy Spirit
- ▶ A new life with Christ in our heart
- ▶ Obtaining forgiveness for all our guilt
- ▶ Experiencing and growing in the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control – Galatians 5:22 NKJV – our character changes and grows.
- ▶ God's guidance
- ▶ Receiving special physical and mental strength
- ▶ Assurance of salvation
- ▶ An angel, who accompanies and assists us
- ▶ Receiving eternal life.

The believer is richly **blessed** with the general and the special, supernatural blessings: *“that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”* (Ephesians 3:19 NKJV); *“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”* (Colossians 2:9-10 NKJV) Not until we have experienced these special blessings, is our life fulfilled as God wanted. It is a life, in which we get to know and appreciate more and more aspects of God's love.

I want to close this study of God's love with a prayer from Paul found in Ephesians 3:16-19:

Prayer: “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, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. AMEN.”

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *Why can we be sure that God is really love?*

2. *Why is it so important to know God's character?
What are the possible consequences of having a false concept of God?*

3. *What difference is there between the general blessings and the special, supernatural blessings from God?*

4. *How can I "grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ"? (Ephesians 3:17 NIV)*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... for an understanding heart to perceive God's character.
 2. ... for a clean and obedient heart.
 3. ... for divine love, which transforms us into His image.
 4. ... for God's special, supernatural blessing.

GOD'S INGENIOUS WAY

*Serving, helping, giving, blessing!
Why and what for?
Willingness – a mindset in accordance
with God's heart*

Who do I follow? The spirit of the time or God's word

From what perspective do we look at the topic “service” – from the world's or from the divine? A “natural” person wants others to serve him, without being willing to be of service himself. It is the same for a “carnal” Christian. The pharisees and scribes at the time of Jesus had the same mentality (see Matthew 23:4-7). But Jesus calls us to something different: “*But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.*” (Matthew 23:11 NKJV) Most people think that this kind of behavior is disadvantageous. But exactly the opposite is true!

Helping helps

Small children want to “help” their parents. Why is it good when parents gladly accept it, even though at first the “help” makes more work? Well, the child grows in his practical and mental abilities through his “helping” or “serving”. He is glad about everything he can do, even though the initial results are often a bit odd. The more often the child can “help”, the better the results will be. And the day will come when the child is suddenly a real help to his parents. The child has developed a skill. And when the child is

allowed to help in many different areas, then he will grow to be a capable person.

What would happen if the parents didn't allow the child to "help"? The child would become frustrated and it would be much more difficult for the child to learn to cope with life.

Jesus' coworkers – why and what for?

Jesus, our great example, came to this earth: "... *to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*" (Matthew 20:28 NKJV)

Why did Jesus institute the foot washing just before His *baptism of suffering*? Up to this point, His disciples still hadn't understood that they should emulate Jesus' life – His life of selfless service. "At this last Passover supper, Jesus repeated His teaching by an illustration that impressed it forever on their minds and hearts." (*Desire of Ages*, p. 642.2 – egwwritings.org).

Might it be possible that we too still haven't understood the real meaning of the foot washing?

The psalmist invites us: "*Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.*" (Psalms 100:2 NKJV). At first glance, we think that serving and gladness don't fit together, right? Think again about how children "want to help". The child experiences joy, when he can "help" or "serve".

God knows that service is good for us. E.G. White comments on this: "**Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed. He that gives to the needy blesses others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree.** God could have reached His object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but He knew **that man could not be happy without** acting a part in the great work in which he would be cultivating **self-denial** and benevolence. **That man might not lose the blessed results of benevolence, our Redeemer formed the plan of enlisting him as His co-worker.**" (*Testimony Treasures, vol. 1*, p. 360.4-361.1)

What astonishing thoughts does this quote contain? Let's take a closer look at it:

- ▶ Doing good in any manner is doubly blessed: Both the giver and the recipient receive a blessing.
- ▶ In the process, the giver receives a greater blessing than the recipient. He experiences: that practicing self-denial and showing goodwill to others refines the character and makes us happy.
- ▶ Furthermore, many contacts are made to people in this way, which in some cases can lead to genuine friendships.
- ▶ Being a true co-worker for God also means leading people to Jesus. This strengthens our faith and creates deep joy within us.

An experience from Bolivia:

Doubly blessed by sharing – What incredible blessings I have received from reading this book (*Steps to Personal Revival*)! Every morning during our devotional time, I share the thoughts with our mission school students. Through the preparation and passing it on, I am blessed twice as much as you. In God's kingdom, it always works like this: the giver always receives more than the recipient. (D. K. Bolivia / South America #9/132)

Serving, giving, helping!

Since not only “natural” people don't like to serve, but “carnal” Christians as well, generally most church members first have to be made ready for service. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is vital for this change, since He brings about a different attitude. The Bible speaks very clearly about this task: “*So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.*” (Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV)

Leaders have the task of teaching people about the preparation for service (Christ living in your heart through the Holy Spirit) and about the meaning of service (for ourselves and others). This presupposes that they have a life with the Holy Spirit, as well as being an example and having competence to give practical instruction in certain areas. Thereby, God blesses the leaders and the church is blessed through them. And the church will be built up by the service of the members within and outside of the church. *Besides the verse mentioned at the beginning, Matthew 20:28, there are an array of other texts, which show us that serving, giving and helping are blessed activities:*

“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measure back to you.” (Luke 6:38 NKJV)

“One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.” (Proverbs 11:24-25 NIV)

“He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given.” (Proverbs 19:17 NKJV)

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NIV) It is best to read from verse 6 to verse 15.

Here are also two quotes from E.G. White on the topic of service:

“Those who reject the privilege of fellowship with Christ in service, reject the only training that imparts a fitness for participation with Him in His glory.” (Education, p. 264.3)

“Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Its blessing can be retained only as it is shared.” (The Ministry of Healing, p. 148.4)

A Standstill is a Step Backwards

Why do many church members experience no spiritual growth? **Why** does the **faith** of many in fact **decrease** over time? **Why** do many **not enjoy reading God’s Word** anymore? And **why** do many no longer have the **fire of the first love**? There is only one answer for me: Because they are living as carnal Christians. **Because they have neglected their relationship with Jesus**, all of the above-mentioned negative results appear! An intensive love relationship with Jesus protects us from egoism and motivates us to serve others. As a result, we are in turn blessed!

Primarily, it doesn’t mean that we are as active as possible in the church, rather that our **actions are Spirit-led**. For that to happen, Jesus has to live in our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Unfortunately, many Christians haven’t completely understood this; they think they have to be active in the church so that God will accept them as His children in the first place. But it is just the opposite: **A true child of God will out of their love and gratitude to Him delight to do something.** At

the same time, a life with the Holy Spirit will motivate him as well. God has a task or multiple tasks for every person. When we ask Him to use us in His service, then He will show us our task(s)!

It is important that each of us examine ourselves: Am I a reborn Christian, am I “in Christ Jesus”? If yes, then we will know that Jesus Christ, who we submit our lives to every morning, lives in us and can work through us.

But if we have to answer the question above with no, then we should immediately go to Jesus and ask Him to come into our lives through the Holy Spirit! Take enough time every day for your relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit! Thereby, we receive the right mindset and attitude, which we need in order to keep our first love or to recapture it, to enjoy reading God’s Word and to grow spiritually.

“To live for self is to perish. Covetousness, the desire of benefit for self’s sake, cuts the soul off from life. It is the spirit of Satan to get, to draw to self. It is the spirit of Christ to give, to sacrifice self for the good of others. ... Wherefore He (Jesus) says, ‘Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.’” (E.G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 259.1-2)

The Law of Service – a vital matter



We often don’t realize that the statement in the heading above is really true. E.G. White comments:

“All things both in heaven and in earth declare that the great law of life is a law of service. The infinite Father ministers to the life of every living thing. Christ came to the earth *“as He that serveth.”* (Luke 22:27) The angels are *“ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”* (Hebrews 1:14) The same **law of service** is written upon all things in nature. ... As each thing in nature ministers thus to the world’s life, it also secures its own. *“Give, and it shall be given unto you”* (Luke 6:38), is the lesson written no less surely in nature than in the pages of Holy Writ.” (E.G. White, *Education*, p. 103.2-3, egwwritings.org)

After this explanation, I would like to share an example from everyday life, which illustrates the **law of service**:

A worker at a carpentry workshop built furniture. He received monthly wages from the company management for his work. The worker “**serves**” the company, but he is also “**rewarded**”. There is give and take on both sides, because: It is true that the company management gives the worker money, in other words they “**serve**” him, but on the other hand, they also receive a “**reward**” in the form of furniture.

Ultimately, the worker isn’t only rewarded with money, rather he also experiences satisfaction and joy for a job well done. And a conscientious worker will always strive to do the best job possible. (The text in Colossians 3:17 applies especially to a **spiritual-minded Christian worker**: “*And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*” (NKJV) And in the course of time the worker’s knowledge about furniture fabrication will continue to grow and his abilities will also continue to improve.

The company management also experiences satisfaction and joy and income is generated when they sell the manufactured furniture. They also will in time expand their knowledge about furniture fabrication and improve their sales strategy.

Service – Delight or Burden?

Most people more likely associate the word *service* with the word *burden* than with *delight*. Why is that? It obviously correlates with the experiences they have personally made with service.

Here is an interesting observation:

“The **service** of Christ is **not drudgery** to the **fully consecrated soul**.... It will be no unpleasant task to be obedient to the will of God **when we yield ourselves fully to be directed by His Spirit.**” (E.G. White, *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, p. 357.2,3)

So it depends on our relationship with Christ, as to how we evaluate service. And then again, our inner attitude depends on if we are filled with the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:5) Only by continuously receiving the Holy Spirit can Jesus permanently live in our hearts. Jesus said Himself: “*Abide in Me, and I in you.*” (John 15:4 NKJV) And when He abides in us, then we will be able to serve without effort and it will even give us joy!

That is why it is so important to daily take the two vital steps:

- ▶ every morning ask by faith (preferably with a promise) that God fills you with the Holy Spirit. And
- ▶ tell Jesus that you are placing your whole life at His disposal. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 676)

When God uses us in His service, when He leads us, then He will give us the tasks **that He prepared for us**. But not only the task, but also at the same time the abilities needed!

(Reading recommendation: *Steps to Christ*, chapter 9: “The Work and the Life”).

Service – under Jesus’ yoke

Jesus said: “*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*” (Matthew 11:29 NKJV)

First, let’s clarify the term “yoke”. What is it? A yoke connects two oxen so that they can serve together in front of a wagon or plow. Jesus wants to encourage us with the picture to work closely together with Him. We are, so to speak, harnessed together with Jesus. He wants to connect with us for joint service. What a privilege this is! He invites us to learn from Him, because He is the master. In verse 30 there are encouraging words: “*For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*” (NKJV) This verse tells me that Jesus won’t overwhelm us, when we “take the yoke” together with Him. In the process, He carries the responsibility, He carries the brunt of the work. And because this is so, He could then say that the load we have to carry is light.

Service and Witness

Morris Venden explains the difference between *service* and *witness*:

“The word **service** describes our **conduct**, while the word **witness** has to do with **what we are** and **what we say**. The purpose of our service for other people is to help them in their life, so that they are then open to accept the good news of the gospel. By our service we can witness effectively of God’s love through our nature and conduct and share what a wonderful friend and Savior we have found in Jesus.”

(*Why Didn’t They Tell Me? Sharing Jesus Isn’t Something We Do. It’s Who We Are*. PPPA 2005)

A special Service: Witnessing

In Mark 5:1-20 there is an interesting story. Jesus healed a demon-possessed man. After he was freed, the man wanted to stay with Jesus and His disciples. But Jesus didn't let him and gave him a special task: "... Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you." (Verse 19 NKJV) What did the healed man do? "And he departed and began and to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled." (Verse 20 NKJV)

E.G. White comments (according to Matthew 8:28-34 there were two men):

"... they went throughout Decapolis, everywhere declaring His power to save, and describing how He had freed them from the demons. **In doing this work they could receive a greater blessing than if, merely for benefit to themselves, they had remained in His presence.** It is in working to spread the good news of salvation that we are brought near to the Saviour." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 339.4)

The two healed men performed their task with joy. Why wasn't it a burden for them? Because their hearts were full of love and gratitude towards Jesus. As the saying goes: "For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of." And they not only told their families what Jesus had done for them, but they shared it in the whole vicinity. Why? We can find a good answer in the book *Steps to Christ*: "...the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. **If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell.**" (E.G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 78.2)

Yes, these healed men had a lot to tell! They were filled with joy over their deliverance. And they wanted to **share their joy with as many people as possible.** Thereby they experienced an additional blessing: "... because the joy we give, returns to our own heart." (German proverb)

Coworkers with God – Coworkers with the Angels

Angels also participate in this service:

“All who engage in ministry are God’s helping hand. **They are co-workers with the angels**; rather, they are the human agencies through whom the angels accomplish their mission. Angels speak through their voices, and work by their hands. And the human workers, co-operating with heavenly agencies, have the benefit of their education and experience. As a means of education, what “university course” can equal this?” (E.G. White, *Education*, p. 271.1)

Whether a mother trains her children in the name of Jesus or if someone holds evangelistic meetings, what is crucial is that Christ works through the Holy Spirit in us.

SERVICE IS A VITAL PART OF OUR PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND COMING



Jesus left us valuable information about His second coming in Matthew 24 and 25. First, He spoke about the signs and then about the manner of His coming. Even though Jesus gave us the signs of His coming, it will still come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. (Matthew 24:43-44) Because this is the case, Jesus said: “*Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.*” (Matthew 24:42 NKJV) Next Jesus illustrated what it means to be vigilant and prepared with different parables. Let’s take a look at the parables.

Two Possible Courses of Conduct for a Steward (Matthew 24:45-51):

Let’s assume that a steward receives the task of caring for the other employees during the absence of his boss. When the boss returns and finds the steward **diligently doing his work**, then he will give this dependable person even greater responsibilities.

But if that steward were **unreliable** and thinks that he has a lot of time before his boss returns and therefore can arrange numerous feasts and drinking sessions instead of working, then the boss’s return will completely surprise him. The boss would then punish this steward.

Jesus illustrates here that it is important to perform the tasks, which God has given us. In this way, we are preparing ourselves for His coming.

Two Groups of Bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1-13):

Ten bridesmaids were waiting for the groom. They had oil lamps with them, because it got dark. Five of them were **wise** and had **extra oil** for their lamps with them. The other five were **foolish**; they had **not taken an extra supply of oil** along. The groom's arrival was delayed longer than they all expected. All of them became tired and fell asleep. When the groom suddenly arrived at midnight, the five foolish women didn't have enough oil along to keep their lamps alight. The wise bridesmaids went with the groom to the celebration hall, while the others still were trying to obtain some oil. Later, when they knocked on the closed door, they were not let in anymore.

Jesus illustrates here that we need to be filled sufficiently with the Holy Spirit in order to be truly prepared for His coming. Those who had "not taken an extra supply" were lost.

Manage the Entrusted Money (Matthew 25:14-30):

A businessman wanted to take a trip and called together his employees in order to entrust them with his assets. During his absence each person should manage their allocated money well. Two employees worked diligently with the money, but one employee did absolutely nothing with the money. When the businessman returned, he rewarded the two diligent men, but punished the lazy one.

Jesus illustrates here that with the right attitude towards God we should utilize our spiritual gifts as well as our natural abilities in service for Him. Whoever does this will not be lost!

A quote from E.G. White relating to this: "The talents that Christ entrusts to His church represent especially the gifts and blessings imparted by the Holy Spirit. ... It includes all gifts and endowments, whether original or acquired, natural or spiritual. All are to be employed in Christ's service." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 327.1, 328.2)

The Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46):

When Jesus comes again, He will divide people into two groups, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He places the sheep to His **right**. They are the **ones who "served" their fellow human beings**, who exercised practical brotherly love. He places the others to His **left**. They are the **ones who haven't helped others**, where help was needed.

Jesus said in verse 40: *“Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”* (NKJV)

Jesus shows us here: His true followers naturally do only good for their fellow men. It has become their “nature”. They are often completely unaware of this!

Isn't it amazing that Spirit-filled service belongs to our wakefulness and preparation for Jesus' second coming?

Jesus' statement – that when we serve others, we are doing it to Him – should make a positive change in our attitude towards service and thus our relationship to others. Just imagine that you could invite Jesus over for a meal or visit Him in the hospital or prison. Jesus said we are doing exactly that when we demonstrate this labor of love to the people in our neighborhood. What an amazing possibility we have to show Jesus' our love! (Bible Study Guide, 3rd quarter 2019, lesson for August 22)

Do we have to earn heaven?

NO!!! We are saved by grace: *“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.”* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The text clearly says that our salvation happens on God's side through grace and on our side through faith. Paul wrote to the Ephesians (as quoted above) that they were saved by grace through faith. **Salvation has already taken place: we were saved at the moment we completely surrendered ourselves to Jesus.** According to the Bible faith means to entrust ourselves. **When we stay in this relationship of trust, then we remain saved.** And our desire to serve is a fruit – a result of our salvation.

Let's also look at a text in Romans 8:24: *“For we were saved in this hope ...”* (NKJV) What does this mean? We have indeed been saved, however God hasn't bound us to Himself. We can free ourselves from this connection at any time. The Bible says that just before the second coming there will be an “examination” in heaven to see who has a relationship with their Heavenly Father or not (see Matthew 22:1-14).

A Summary of what Service accomplishes

Spirit-filled, consecrated disciples of Christ gain through their service joy and strength, their practical, mental and spiritual abilities increase and their character is positively developed in accordance with God's wishes and to their best interest. Step by step selfishness loses its power. My life becomes attractive to other people. They can discern a different, appealing lifestyle. This creates good conditions for witnessing about what Jesus has done for me and in me. My service helps others, so that they experience an improvement or relief. He is happy with his experience with me. He passes it on and often multiplication takes place. And I am safeguarded against wilting or losing my faith. And the chance that the recipient will open his heart for the gospel increases.

Now we want to take a look at an attitude, which can bring us great relief in many questions of life. It has to do with our willingness to follow our Lord Jesus in everything, which includes serving, giving, helping and blessing. With God it doesn't matter how big the talent (giving, serving, helping) is, but rather it depends on our willingness. He is delighted with everything a person can give and doesn't require from us what we don't have. (2 Corinthians 8:12)

Day 10

OUR WILLINGNESS MATTERS TO GOD – HE WANTS TO BESTOW US WITH IT

Why is it extremely important for us to be ready to do God's will? Very simple, because we would suffer a great loss without this willingness. We want to take a closer look at this.

As already mentioned, due to our sinful human nature we are often unwilling and unable in our own strength to do God's will.

Consider the following: **God loves us** with His unselfish love. **He wants the best for us.** He is **acquainted with our character** and **our present situation.** Since He is all-knowing, **He also knows what will happen in the future.** When we take this all into consideration, it is doubtless the most sensible and at the same time, the most advantageous thing for us to follow His will in His strength. Jesus says in John 10:10: *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* (NKJV)

He wants to lead on the best path – specially tailored to our personality and the present day. In order for Him to be able to lead us, we have to be willing. **When we ask Him for a willing spirit, then He will create**

the willingness in us. He makes our spirit willing. Since the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16), it is also important to daily pray for a willing spirit. We can pray as follows:

“Lord, make me willing to be ready for everything that you want.”

God is pleased when we allow Him to lead us. For God, it is just like parents, who are happy when their child is willingly obedient.

In general, what is *willingness* and how does it manifest itself?

Willingness is an **inner attitude of openness**. It is an attitude, which requires a humble and teachable spirit.

I want to share **an example of a lack of willingness** to learn: It's about Dr. Semmelweis. In 1840 Vienna was an important center for medicine. But at the university clinic's maternity ward, one out of every six women, who had just given birth, died. In 1840 when the young medical doctor Dr. Semmelweis took over the leadership of the ward, he noticed that exactly those women died, who had been examined by a doctor, who had just previously done an autopsy. Back then the doctors didn't wash their hands after examining a corpse. So, Dr. Semmelweis first ordered that hands were to be washed after every autopsy and then later after examining every patient. The results were astounding: There was a 14-fold improvement! Hardly any women died anymore. **But the professors and medical doctors were too proud to acknowledge this success!** There was a storm of protest against the “senseless” hand washing. Dr. Semmelweis' employment contract wasn't renewed and the sinks in the patient's room, which he had had installed, were torn out. As a result, the death rate of the women went back to what it had been. Dr. Semmelweis left Vienna and went to Budapest. There he repeated his method of procedure. But again, his colleagues turned against him.

Without Divine Wisdom, often no Willingness exists

Dr. Semmelweis' experience illustrates the fact that we can act very foolishly because of pride and prejudice, even if we are highly intelligent. Foolishness is the opposite of wisdom. Nowadays, a lot of importance is placed on the intelligence of a person and on his powers of reasoning. The term

wisdom has more or less been pushed into the background; but in God's word great significance is attached to wisdom (see Proverbs, chapters 8 and 9). The Bible says something interesting in Psalm 111:10: ***"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding."*** NIV This is speaking about divine wisdom here. And someone, whose life is led by God, that is a God-fearing person, demonstrates good understanding – at least that is what the above-mentioned text says. We could also say that precisely someone, who lives with God, behaves intelligently! That is exactly opposite of what most people believe today. Modern people think that giving up God and religion is proof of their intelligence. What a delusion! It hits the mark in Romans 1:22: *"Professing to be wise, they became fools."* (NKJV)

Human wisdom – also called philosophy – is, as are all works of men, imperfect. We can see it alone in the fact that leading philosophers contradict each other in their perceptions of the meaning of life, the essence of the world and the place of humans on the earth. (More: Eta Linnemann, *Wissenschaft oder Meinung?* – Hänssler 1986)

In the Bible God says the following about human wisdom: *"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate. Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?"* (1 Corinthians 1:19-20 NIV) It is interesting that this text also mentions the "teachers of the law". Today we call them theologians or pastors. It may well be that they are teaching *only* on the basis of their human intelligence and for this reason are called *fools* by God. Or when they study the Bible only with their human understanding, without being led by the Holy Spirit, then the findings they pass on are probably also of a questionable nature.

In conclusion: **Only the person, regardless if they have a religious occupation or not, who lives a life filled with the Holy Spirit, will be able to be a wise person. And only a wise person will be willing to do God's will!**

How does willingness manifest itself or how does a willing spirit manifest itself in spiritual areas?

When Jesus lived on this earth, He showed this willingness. He taught us to pray in the Lord's Prayer: *"Your will be done."* He Himself lived according to this principle too. Even during the difficult situation in **the Garden of Gethsemane, He showed a willing spirit.** Three times He prayed:

“... nevertheless, **not as I will, but as You will.**” (Matthew 26:39 NKJV) The believers in Berea are another example of this kind of willingness. They listened to the preaching of the gospel by Paul with an open spirit. We read in Acts 17:11 NKJV: “*These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with **all readiness**, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*”

When we have a willing spirit towards God and His word, then we will carefully examine everything we read, hear and see. When the information conforms with God’s will, then we can accept it and put it into practice.

What can hinder a person from having a willing attitude towards God?

Romans 8:5 NIV says: “*Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*”

Today we speak about being programmed for this or that. The actions of a **natural person and a carnal Christian** are determined by their selfishness. Pride, prejudice as well as occult exposure can hinder us from being open towards God. These people will not have a willing attitude towards God nor accept new insights from His word.

On the other hand, every **spiritual Christian** will with the help of the Holy Spirit have an open attitude. He will heed what it says in Romans 12:2 GNT: “*Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, **but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind.** Then you will be able to know the will of God – what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect.*”

Wise and Willing through the Holy Spirit

It is the Holy Spirit, who makes us wise and willing to serve. In this context I want to quote Acts 6:3: “*Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, **full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom**, whom we may appoint over this business.*” (NKJV) This was the first election within the New Testament church – the election of deacons. What were the determining criteria for the election? They should have a good reputation, they should be wise and filled with the Holy Spirit. And after everything we have discussed, we understand that only such people can wholeheartedly serve.

Since each of us is called to active service according to the New Testament, we should ideally be wise and filled with the Holy Spirit. The Bible gives us good counsel in case we come to the conclusion that we are lacking wisdom. *“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.”* (James 1:5 NIV)

I have experienced again and again the truth of these words. God promises to answer our request for wisdom. The answer can take various forms: Sometimes I experienced that immediately after my prayer the solution for a certain problem suddenly popped into my head. But most of the time I had the impression that at the moment I had no new insights after praying. But when I continued my work in complete faith, at the end I was amazed at how the Lord had helped me – almost imperceptibly. God really loves to help! He wants our work, no matter what kind, to bring good results.

Those who willingly do God’s will, will be richly blessed!

When I understand that God **always** has my best interest in mind including for eternity, then I will gladly do His will. When someone wants to do something good for us from pure motives, as a rule, we have no objections, right? And those who have frequently experienced how God has done good for them, will gladly entrust themselves to God’s leading. That is why David could say: *“I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.”* (Psalm 40:8 NKJV)

At this juncture, I would like to emphasize again that it is the Holy Spirit, who creates in us this willingness to want to follow God’s paths. And when we ask God every morning to lead us with His Spirit, then we will experience amazing things! For example, Dwight Nelson was able to have the following experience after he started to **daily** pray for the Holy Spirit:

“My preaching has gained a new freedom and intensity. My leadership with my team and my people has been raised to another level. Suddenly coincidences (what one writer calls synchronicity) are multiplying – it’s as if someone is orchestrating my days and nights, my “chance” meetings and emails and conversations. It’s as if the Holy Spirit is personally directing my waking hours (even my sleeping ones). In fact, I’ve come to know Him as a very personal and truly dear Friend.”

Dwight Nelson is senior pastor of Pioneer Memorial Church on the campus of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA. (Extract from the

Prayer Letter No. 143, April 22, 2018 Prayer Ministry of the General Conference)

Every day offers a new chance to experience anew God's will for my life and to be led by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 4:16). The willingness I had yesterday to follow Him is no guarantee that I will be obedient today too. Therefore, let us pray **daily** that we will be willing or remain willing to do His will: **"Father in heaven, please make me willing to be willing to do everything you want. Please take my thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ."** (according to 2 Corinthians 10:5) Such a prayer is in accordance with God's will and will therefore definitely be answered (1 John 5:14). And when we pray in this manner, we are **people after God's own heart**. How do we know this? It's in the Bible in Acts 13:22 NKJV: *"... I have found David ..., a man after My own heart, who will do all My will."*

Do you want to be a child, a youth, a man or a woman after God's own heart?

Doing God's Will brings Freedom

At first, a person is inclined to believe that they aren't free, when they should do the will of someone else (in this case God's will). But we need to briefly think about the term freedom. There is **no absolute freedom**. However, we have the freedom to decide **for or against God**. Since God is love and freedom plays an essential role for Him, I obtain freedom and happiness when I follow Him.

When I don't decide for God, then Satan is my master. And he doesn't allow any freedom for people; he works with *force*. Every addict is proof of this. And when someone wants to leave Satan's realm, then they will experience that Satan won't let them go just like that.

In contrast, God is to be sure sad, when we leave Him, but He exercises absolutely no force on us in order to induce us to stay.

When we take this all into consideration, we better understand that we can only lead a *free* and *happy* life near to God and it is true, when we say: Doing God's will brings freedom!

Being Willing brings Fruit

In conclusion, I would like to share two examples of how God can use us, when we place ourselves at His disposal. And it doesn't matter if we are poor or rich, young or old, educated or uneducated.

The first example is from the Bible. We can find it in John 6:5-13. A boy gave Jesus everything he had; it wasn't much – two small fish and five small loaves of bread. Now, he had nothing left for himself. And what did Jesus do? He performed a miracle so that the hunger of all present was satisfied. Everyone – in this case 5,000 men and approximately the same number of women and children.

We can see: When we place ourselves or our talents in God's hands, He can make something much greater out of it!

The boy could eat more than what he gave to Jesus. What he gave was, so to speak, the seeds. According to the law of cause and effect, **the harvest is always more than the seed.**

The second example is an experience from Germany starting in 1994.

A fellow believer gave 10,000 DM (former German currency) for a project, which was part of the global mission for building a church in an unentered one million area in Uzbekistan. He called me a year later and told me that the 10,000 DM, which he had donated, were the royalties from a book that he had written. And now he had just gotten a letter from the publishing house, saying that the demand for his book was so great that they were going to print a second edition. He again received a check for 10,000 DM.

He further explained that it is rare that a second edition of a non-fiction book is even printed. It was clear for him: God had had a hand in this. God had given him his 10,000 DM back. At the end of our telephone conversation, the brother said: "When you need money again for mission work, let me know." One day the time had come. I called this brother. The first thing he said was: "I just wanted to call you, but you beat me to it. Namely, I wanted to send you a check, which you may use for mission purposes." He then went on to joyfully share that in the meantime a third edition of his book had been printed and he had just received a check from the printing house again. He could hardly believe it himself! I then told him about our mission project and explained that we would only need the money first in a few weeks. I told him that he could take his time and think about it and decide if he wanted to participate in the project. He responded: "I am

sending you a check.” It arrived the next day and was for 25,000 DM! When we coincidentally met at an event a few weeks later, he let me know: “Did you know that I had already written the check for 25,000 DM before you called me?”

Thus, God was able in this wonderful manner to bless this brother and the mission project! The text mentioned at the beginning in Luke 6:38 became a reality for this brother: *“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”* (NKJV)

May these experiences help us to love Jesus more deeply than before and to serve Him with joy, while being filled with the Holy Spirit.

My Prayer: “Father in heaven, please forgive me for having had a partially or completely wrong perception of serving, giving and helping. Thank you so much for blessing me and others at the same time, when I serve, give and help. You ingeniously planned this! Please, give me every day the right heart’s attitude so that I can do everything you want out of love for you and full of joy. AMEN.”

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What ingenious thoughts has God connected with serving, helping and giving? What implications does this have?*

2. *Under what condition is service not a burden, but rather a joy?*

3. *Why is it important to have reason/intelligence and wisdom?*

4. *What attitude do we have to have in order to be after God's own heart?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... that you will be able to serve others with joy as a result of having Christ in your heart by faith.
 2. ... that God will show you who needs your help.
 3. ... that you will be safeguarded against pride and calculation, if you can do great things with God's help.
 4. ... for a willing and joyful heart and endurance for service to God and man.

WHO IS WORKING: GOD THROUGH ME OR ME FOR GOD?

*It revolves around a vital question:
Am I working for God with my human abilities?
Or can God work through me with
His divine abilities?*

A Striking Biblical Example: Moses

At first, Moses was an example of a person, who lived self-reliantly. However, later he became a good example of a person, who God can work through. At 40 years of age he wanted to free his people with his superior human abilities. It only had harmful consequences. Many years later God was able to do great things through him with divine results.

In Acts 7:22-25 NKJV it reports that: *“And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds. Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. **For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand.**”*

Moses had to flee and lived for forty years as a shepherd in Midian. Eventually, he came to the point of complete surrender. Then God gave him the insights, which are written in the book of Genesis. Only then did God instruct Moses to free the Israelites. So, Moses obediently set off for Egypt. Suddenly, he was stopped by an angel. A known sin existed – a sin of omission. (Exodus 4:24-26, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 255-256) This one sin had to be remedied first. Then the angels could protect him and **God could work with His divine abilities through him:**

Moses led his people out of slavery. He performed incredible signs and miracles everywhere: in Egypt before Pharaoh, crossing the Red Sea and during the 40 years in the wilderness. God even spoke with him personally and gave him the tablets of stone with the ten commandments.

He became one of the greatest leaders in the world, because God could work through him. (Recommended reading: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 22: Moses)

Am I working for God or is He working through me?

Our key text is Ephesians 2:10 NKJV:

*“For we are **His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”* (GNT): *“He has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do.”*

This talks about **two works!**

The first work, God’s work *in me*

The first work God does is **in me**. This is my new life in Christ. Jesus said: *“Come to me ...”* (Matthew 11:28 NKJV) and *“... as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God ...”* (John 1:12 NKJV)

Those who have come to Jesus and accepted Him as their Lord and Redeemer receive another invitation and promise: *“Abide in Me, and I in you.”* (John 15:4 NKJV) Jesus wants to enter an abiding, intimate relationship with us. How does this happen? It is a matter of two daily steps of faith:

The first step:

Ephesians 5:18 says: *“Be filled with the Spirit.”* Or in other words: *“Be continuously and repeatedly filled with the Spirit.”* (Joh. Mager: *Auf den Spuren des Geistes*, p. 101). So, it has to do with asking for and receiving the

Holy Spirit. Just as a mill wheel has to be in running water so that it stays moving, we have to remain in the river of the Holy Spirit so that God can work through us and give us life abundantly. And yet it isn't God's intention that we become receptacles for the Holy Spirit. No, God wants us to be a line or channel, through which He can reach other people with His love. (See Luke 11:5-13).

The next step:

“... *that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*” (Romans 12:1 NKJV)

This is a life of complete surrender to Christ. The best and shortest explanation of these steps can be found in *The Desire of Ages*, p. 676.2. It sums it up:

- ▶ a constant receiving of the Holy Spirit – and
- ▶ a life of unreserved surrender to His service.

Here is a short explanation of the meaning of the Holy Spirit: “But **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.**” (E.G. White, *Adv. Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 10, 1902).

Another quote regarding surrender: “He who will give himself fully to God will be guided by the divine hand... As he treasures the lessons of divine wisdom, **a sacred commission will be entrusted to him ...**” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 283.3)

Now we have the answer to the question of how we can have a continual, living connection with Jesus: by daily asking for and receiving the Holy Spirit, as well as the daily renewal of our surrender to Him and His service. Each morning it is our most important task to take these two spiritual steps. In this way **God's work in me** is maintained – i.e. my new life, which I have received based on God's grace and my faith, is kept alive.

The Second Work – God's Work Through Me

On the basis of this new life, God does another work – a work **through me**. Let's read Ephesians 2:10 NKJV again: “*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*” GNT: “He has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do.”

It says that these good works have been prepared by God beforehand. It is our job in connection with Him to perform these prepared works.

So, in God's general plan He has a partial plan for me. He has prepared certain tasks for me. By completing these tasks, we grow in faith and our practical, spiritual and mental abilities are developed. We experience joy and strength while working for God's kingdom and at the same time we are being prepared for God's kingdom through this service. (For more on this topic read: E.G. White, *Education*, p. 264)

Nehemiah and the whole community experienced: "... *the joy of the Lord is your strength.*" (Nehemiah 8:10 NKJV)

Yes, through their work for God they experienced this. In only 52 days Jerusalem's walls were rebuilt, because the people were neither intimidated nor deterred from their work by their enemies. The whole time Nehemiah led the way by faith!

And that is what we should do as well. Remembering what the Lord has already done for us is very helpful, as well as Romans 8:31 NKJV: "*If God is for us, who can be against us?*"

Day 12

God plans superbly and long-term

"God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance... He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every straight." (E.G. White, *My Life Today*, p. 37,4)

Since God knows the future and every person extremely well, He also knows how He can use us optimally – to accomplish the best for us and God's kingdom.

In John 7:37-39 NKJV we read:

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said (here it is talking about the first work – our new life), out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit ..." (This has to do with the second work – that God wants to do through us.)

This Bible text means the following: If we daily quench our thirst and desire with Jesus, then we will not only have enough living water for ourselves, but rather the Lord will make this living water in us into a spring – a multiplication – so that rivers of living water can flow from us to others. This is a wonderful promise!

The tasks God has entrusted us will determine to what degree we can influence our surroundings. Since no one lives for themselves, our acts

don't only affect ourselves alone, but our environment as well. And sometimes the influence of one person reaches to the end of the earth.

God wants to and can do great things through us, if we cultivate an intimate relationship with Him:

“To everyone who offers himself to the Lord for service, withholding nothing, is given power for the attainment of measureless results.” (E.G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 30.2).

Whoever does this has the promise in John 14:12 NKJV:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.”

The expression “greater works” means spatial expansion here.

Why will we be able to do greater works than Christ? Jesus' explanation was: **Because** I go to My Father. What did He mean by that? After His ascension, He received all power in heaven and earth once again. And when Jesus lives in my heart through the Holy Spirit, then He can accomplish these “great works” through me. Let's take another look at Nehemiah, who was a positive biblical example.

Was rebuilding Jerusalem's walls Nehemiah's idea?

What motivated Nehemiah, who was no building expert, to rebuild the city walls of Jerusalem, even though he was far away in Persia and had a great position? We read in Nehemiah 2:12 NKJV: “... *what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem ...*” E.G. White comments: “... while praying, the plan had been formed in his [Nehemiah's] mind ...” (*Southern Watchman*, March 29, 1904)

The work in Jerusalem wasn't Nehemiah's idea, rather he was commissioned by God. God had planned and prepared the work for him beforehand.

God blessed Nehemiah greatly! In the end, his work was very successful. Nehemiah experienced what E.G. White wrote in *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 3, p. 341.3: “God will do the work if we will furnish Him the instruments.”

Hindrance or Promoter?

Besides Nehemiah, who else played an important role in the success? E.G. White wrote: “Among the first to catch Nehemiah’s spirit of zeal and earnestness were the priests of Israel. From the position of influence which they occupied, these men could do much to hinder or advance the work. Their ready co-operation at the very outset contributed not a little to its success.” (*The Southern Watchman*, April 5, 1904)

An undivided Heart

Nehemiah is a biblical example of a person, who cultivated an intimate relationship with God his whole life. He gave his whole life with an undivided heart to God. God is always on the watch for people like this. We read in 2 Chronicles 16:9 NKJV: “*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.*” That is the prerequisite – an undivided heart – so that God’s power can work through us.

Our complete surrender and our life with the Holy Spirit (*DA*, 676.2) makes it possible for the Lord to work powerfully through us. Not until our new life is well under way – when we have a consistent, vibrant relationship with God – will God entrust us with the work that He has prepared. Only on the foundation of the first living work, can the second work – a work from God – be built. If the new life (John 3:1-17) hasn’t begun yet or ceases to exist, then our work is done only in human strength accompanied by all the human limitations and problems.

Another Example: King Asa

For the most part of his life, Asa trusted God and followed His leading, but towards the end of his life he went his own way. He showed this, for example, when he asked the Assyrian king, Ben-Hadad, for military help instead of asking God. When God sent the seer, Hanani, to tell Asa what negative consequences his foolish actions would bring, the king became so angry that he threw the seer into prison. Likewise, three years later when Asa became ill, he didn’t go to God, but rather trusted his doctors. Because Asa refused to allow God’s Spirit to guide him, God withdrew His help. If we think about it, Asa was a faithful king for 35 years and had extraordinary experiences with God and yet the last six years of his life he was a questionable follower

of God. We can only pray: “Lord, help me to remain true to your ways until the end of my life!” (See: 1 Kings 15:8-24 and 2 Chronicles 14-16).

The Bible says the following about Satan: “... *who deceives the whole world ...*” (Revelation 12:9 NKJV) The apostle Paul tells us: “*Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*” (1 Corinthians 10:12 NKJV) We want to take a look at another example – this time from Adventist history – for our protection and as a warning.

**What effect does it have on God’s work,
when I step by step deviate from faith,
nevertheless I remain in service?**

Maybe we can ask ourselves now: Is it even possible for someone, who works for God not to be led (anymore) by His Spirit?

Dr. John Harvey Kellogg was a very talented doctor and a prominent personality in our church and in the U.S.A. Over the years this intelligent man ignored, for example, God’s counsel on building and running a sanatorium. God allowed the Battle Creek Sanatorium to burn to the ground and the new sanatorium, built under Kellogg’s leadership, to declare bankruptcy. Unfortunately, during the time he worked as a doctor for the church, he developed strange theological views, which he at first spread verbally. As a result, he misled many church members. After a time, Kellogg wanted to publish a book, which was rejected by our leaders, because it contained false teachings. Subsequently, Kellogg decided to print the book at his own expense. He gave our publishing house, *Review and Herald*, which for some time had also been printing for outsiders, an order for 5,000 copies. The publishing house agreed. God intervened directly and let the publishing house be destroyed by a horrific fire. Consequently, Kellogg sent his manuscript to an external publishing house to be printed. Only eternity will show how much damage Kellogg did to God’s work, especially among the youth, until he finally left the church of his own accord. (For more information see: Lewis R. Walton: “Omega”, *Review and Herald*). In this case, we don’t even need to ask if he worked for God in his own strength or if God was able to work through him.

Working for God is one thing, but God working through us is another thing

In connection to this I want to share a quotation from Le Roy E. Froom: “To work for God is one thing; but to have God work through us is another. It is one thing to forsake the world and follow Christ; it is quite another to be one in whom the Holy Spirit dwells abundantly with His plenitude of power and grace. ... And God cannot do something revolutionary *with* men until He has first done something revolutionary *for* men through the incoming of the Holy Spirit.” (The Coming of the Comforter, Review and Herald 1928, p. 119)

It can happen to us too – as it did to Dr. Kellogg – that we believe we should do this or that for God, without being led by God’s Spirit. We need to ask ourselves at times: Am I working with my human abilities and limitations for God, possibly even with the authority of an administrative position, or can the Lord work through me with His divine abilities and His limitless possibilities?

How God can work in the second work depends on my relationship with Him

In regard to **our authors** E.G. White wrote:

“A piece written in the Spirit of God angels approbate, and impress the same upon the readers. But a piece written when the writer is not living wholly for the glory of God, not wholly devoted to him, angels feel the lack in sadness. They turn away and do not impress the reader with it because God and his Spirit are not in it. The words are good but it lacks the warm influence of the Spirit of God.” (*PH 016*, 29.1 egwwritings.org).

For the most part, what matters most in Christian literature? It should be written under the influence of the Holy Spirit and the author should live to God’s glory, namely, in complete surrender to Christ and His service. God isn’t impressed by the marvelous contents of an article. He is much more interested in the spiritual attitude of the author who wrote the text. When the author wrote under the influence of the Holy Spirit, then God can impress the reader through the same Spirit and the reader can come closer to God.

It is also true for all other areas, be it the ministry, teaching, leading a mission project, church leadership, family life, training a child or something

similar, that “It is not the power that emanates from men that makes the work successful, it is the power of the heavenly intelligences working with the human agent that brings the work to perfection.” (E.G. White, *Christian Service*, p. 260.3)

God can only exercise His valuable influence through us, when we have a living relationship with God. In other words, if we aren’t living in complete surrender or are insufficiently filled with the Holy Spirit, then great blessings can be lost or damage can be caused!

Preaching God’s Word

Let’s consider this correlation in connection with **preaching God’s Word**. When pastors are insufficiently filled with the Holy Spirit, then their sermons will never accomplish what God longs for. A quote from the *Desire of Ages*, p. 671.4:

“The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit... One might be able to present the letter of the word of God, he might be familiar with all its commands and promises; but unless the Holy Spirit sets home the truth, no souls will fall on the Rock and be broken. No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the co-operation of the Spirit of God.”

God and the angels only work with us, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit and live in complete surrender to Christ. It doesn’t matter who we are or what we do, God let us know through E.G., White: “The value of our work is in proportion to the impartation of the Holy Spirit.” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.4) And: “It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you.... He longs to have you expect **great things** from Him.” (*Christ Object Lessons*, p. 146.4) (Further recommended reading: *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 283-284)

We will experience God’s helping strength and power all the more, the more we foster intimate fellowship with Him. “We shall not gain the victory through numbers, but through the full surrender of the soul to Jesus.” (*Sons and Daughters of God*, 279.2).

Unfortunately, many people, once including myself, are afraid of or have reservations about completely surrendering themselves to God. They think they would become slaves. This point of view is completely false. The Bible compares a relationship with Christ with a marriage. Christ is a brilliant

partner! When a person is married, they can get a divorce if they want to. We can also disconnect ourselves from Christ; we remain free people. But I think that under no circumstance do we want to do that, since a relationship with Christ is the best possible relationship. He wants to have a relationship with us, in which we are united in love and trust with Him. (For more on the topic: *Abide in Jesus*, chapter “Surrender to Jesus”, see www.schritte-zur-persoenlichen-erweckung.info).

God’s intervention can go much further than our human possibilities

God wants to do great and incredible things even today (Jeremiah 33:3). When we live so that God can work in and through us, then we will experience time and again surprising things – great and incredible things. It is like this: what God plans to do through me, will in certain areas go beyond my capabilities and abilities. And that is a good thing. It brings joy and great amazement and promotes our dependance and collaboration with God.

Here are two quotes from our literature about this: “Ask for Christ’s grace and efficiency, and you will not be left to labor alone.” (The Ellen G. White *1888 Materials*, 141.5).

“To everyone who offers himself to the Lord for service, withholding nothing, is given power for the attainment of measureless results.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 30.2).

Consistent Prayer Connection

When we live so that God works in and through us, then we need a consistent prayer connection with Him. We need to be connected to the One, who prepared the task for us. He can guide us the best through it. It is like driving with a navigation device. God has given us an enormous promise concerning connection: “*Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.*” (Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV; further promises: John 7:37; John 14:12-14; John 15:7; John 15:16; Matthew 18:19; 1 John 3:22). The Lord not only promises to answer our requests, but also to show us great and mighty things. He gives us a divine answer.

Divine Counsel

“Let no one overtax his God-given powers in an effort to advance the Lord’s work more rapidly. The power of man cannot hasten the work; with this must be united the power of heavenly intelligences . . . Man cannot do God’s part of the work. A Paul may plant, and an Apollos water, but God gives the increase. In simplicity and meekness man is to co-operate with divine agencies, at all times doing his best, yet ever realizing that God is the great Master Workman.” (E.G. White, 7T 298.2, egwwritings.org).

What ramifications did Jesus’ life here on earth have?

Philipp Brooks said: “I am definitely not mistaken when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the naval fleets that were ever built, all parliament sessions that were ever held and all kings that ever ruled, didn’t affect the lives of people on earth as much as Jesus’ lonely life did.” (*Letters to Andrew, No. 2*)

How was the human Jesus of Nazareth able to exercise such an enormous influence? Jesus told us the reason very clearly in John 14:10 NKJV:

“Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.”

As a human Jesus could have an enormous influence, because the Father was in Him and exercised His divine influence.

Or let’s take a look at the **apostle Paul**. How was God able to do such unbelievably great mission work through him? We can find the answer in Galatians 2:19-20 NKJV: *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me....”* He gave up His autonomy; Christ was allowed to lead his life.

This is why Paul later said the following about the tremendous work he was able to do:

*“I will not venture to speak of anything except what **Christ** has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done – by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God.”* (Romans 15:18-19 NIV)

The key is *being-in-Christ*.

“Christ in us”

E.G. White said: “A knowledge of this mystery [Christ in us] furnishes a key to every other. It opens to the soul the treasures of the universe, the possibilities of infinite development.” (E.G. White, *Education*, p.172.1)

Jesus Christ wants to live in us. In this way, He wants to give us a fulfilled life and work through us, whether in insignificant things or great things. (For more on the subject: *Abide in Jesus* – chapter “Jesus abiding in you”, see www.steps-to-personal-revival.info)

John Wesley realized: “God can do more with one man, who has committed [surrendered, devoted] himself 100% to God, than He can with a whole army of men, who have only committed themselves 99% to God.” (Joseph Kidder, *A Guide to a Spiritual Life*, Andrews University, PPP slide 14)

God’s Word states clearly in Zechariah 4:6 NKJV: “*What you are planning will neither succeed by the might of an army nor by human strength; rather, my Spirit will accomplish it! I, the Lord God Almighty, promise this.*” (Zechariah 4:6 translated from the German *Hoffnung für alle* version)

Day 14

God can also do great things through children and youth

Mary Jones was born in 1784 in a small village in Wales. She grew up in a devout Methodist family. As a child she loved the stories in the Bible. After she learned to read, she fervently wished for her own Bible. But back then Bibles were very expensive and there weren’t many copies. On Sundays Mary was allowed to read the Bible at a rich family’s house, who lived about four kilometers away. In order to own her own Bible, she started to earn money as soon as she could by doing odd jobs. For example, one day she gathered wood and sold it, another day she babysat.

It took her six years to save enough money. When she was 16 years old, she walked barefoot 42 km from Langfihangel over mountainous terrain to Bala, in order to buy a Bible from a pastor there.

Pastor Thomas Charles told her that he indeed had two Bibles, but they were already promised to other people. Unfortunately, he couldn’t give her one. Mary cried bitterly! She was very distraught. Somewhat irritated, the pastor asked her why she was crying. She told him that she had been saving her money for a Bible for six years; when he heard this he relented and gave her one of the Bibles. Overjoyed, she made her way home!

The pastor was so impressed by this incident that he shared his experience with Mary at the next meeting of the *Religious Tract Society*. “We have

to find a way so that everyone in Wales can buy a reasonably priced Bible.” Thereupon his colleague Robert William said: “Why don’t we find a way for the whole world?” As a result, the first world-wide Bible society was established (*British and Foreign Bible Society*). Following their example, more than 140 Bible societies were founded in time.

It is amazing what our heavenly Father was able to do through one simple, devout girl! So, let us consider the following words:

Never underestimate the influence of an individual, when the working of God’s Spirit is set in motion in mighty ways. God may be calling you for such a time as this.

(Advised reading: Esther 4:14-16 and also: *Christian Service*, chapter 26: Assurance of Success)

GOD HAS ALSO PREPARED A WORK FOR ME

To God’s glory and for the encouragement of the readers, I would like to share what task God gave me in 2011/2012, without my even realizing it then. He started a work, which would pervade my life more and more. On the one hand, I experience great challenges, but on the other hand, I also experience many victories and great joy. I am well aware that this work that God gave me, is His work and should remain His work. Every work of a person, who lets God use them, is only a building block in God’s great work. For this reason: “Let your light so shine that the glory will redound to God instead of to yourselves. ... Let your light so shine; be careful, minister of Christ, in what manner your light shines. If it flashes heavenward, revealing the excellence of Christ, it shines aright. If it is turned upon yourself, if you exhibit yourself, and attract the people to admire you, it would be better for you to hold your peace altogether: for your light shines in the wrong way.” (E.G. White, *4T*, p. 400.1, egwwritings.org)

A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE: SPREADING REVIVAL LITERATURE

Imperceptibly the Lord set in motion the work of spreading revival literature for me. The development of the brochures shows me clearly that I am not the author, rather I was permitted to be and am still a tool in God’s hand.

It all began like this: Through four different impulses God encouraged me to prepare several sermons on the topic of a Spirit-filled life. After I held one of these sermons in a church, I would give all the church members a printed copy of the sermon. These copies they shared with other friends. Thus, two leading, theologically experienced brothers received my sermons in written form. One of them wrote the following to me on May 1, 2012:

“Your sermons on *Steps to Personal Revival* are a gift from heaven – first for you and then through you for all the readers. ... Although we recently have received several practical and deeply spiritual books in our church, the topic of *Steps to Personal Revival* is extraordinary. In a quite compact and yet detailed manner, the way to be filled with the Holy Spirit is outlined. Whoever reads this can’t get around making a spiritual inventory and making a decision.”

Both of the theologians were impressed by the contents and recommended that I print the sermons as a brochure. I thought about it and decided that the sermons would only make a small brochure, which wouldn’t be of interest to a publishing house. Hence, I did absolutely nothing about it.

But God saw the whole matter differently. He had long since had a plan. And He also knew how it could be achieved.

Through God’s leading I received a short time later an inquiry from the *Deutsch-Schweizerischen Vereinigung* (DSV – German-Swiss Conference) in Zurich. They would like to print **my sermons as a brochure**. And they were asking for my permission. The DSV promised to take care of all the details (correction, design, photos, printing quotes, etc.). I could hardly believe it! Under God’s guidance the first German edition of *Steps to Personal Revival* was published in October 2012. Without any plans from me.

Before they started publishing, the DSV contacted the other German-speaking conferences and unions and the Austrian Union as well. The Baden-Württembergische Conference in Germany and the Austrian Union joined the undertaking and now 9,200 copies were needed.

We went ahead with courageous faith and put in a print order for **10,000** copies. However, the printer made an unintentional mistake and printed **13,500** copies. What should we do now? We relied on the promise in Romans 8:28, where it says that all things work together for good to those who love God and accepted the surplus delivery.

Amazingly, the 13,500 were soon gone and we had to keep printing more copies. Unbelievable, isn’t it? Since then there have been 8 editions

in German of *Steps to Personal Revival* with a total of 45,000 copies. Many church members, whose hearts were moved by the message, helped distribute the brochures.

What does it say again in Ephesians 2:10 NIV: “*For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*”

The Lord prepared various immense distribution possibilities!

God ensured that this message was shared in various manners with as many people as possible. I have received and keep receiving invitations from churches within the country and abroad with the request to hold the seminar *Steps to Personal Revival*. (It consists of four hours: Sharing experiences on Friday evening, a sermon on Sabbath and two hours in the afternoon.)

In the meantime, there are other brothers, who help hold these seminars. Many preachers around the world use these topics in their sermons.

The following things came about because of God’s leading, without any plans on my part: video recordings, audio book recordings, e-book distribution through Amazon, as well as translation into many languages. The Lord connected me with a couple, who developed the German and English website. German: www.schritte-zur-persoenlichen-erweckung.info – English: www.steps-to-personal-revival.info). The brochures can be read online, be downloaded for free or sent – namely, *Steps to Personal Revival* in 40 languages and the sequel *Abide in Jesus* in nearly 20 languages. Altogether are printed 1.3 million copies plus an unknown number online from 143 countries (as of August 2020).

Many readers have shared their experiences. You can read them under “Erfahrungen” or “Testimonies” (about 160).

From the more than 500 oral and written testimonies I have received, further insights have been added to the brochures. They show where *Steps to Personal Revival* can lead:

- ▶ We recognize clearly that the Holy Spirit is the most precious gift that Jesus offers us.
- ▶ This material opens our eyes for a correct self-assessment in relation to our spiritual status.

- ▶ We have a better understanding of the two essential steps that lead to an attractive spiritual life and assurance of salvation.
- ▶ When praying with promises our prayers take on a whole new quality. We pray with joy, more confidence and depth. By praying with promises many received the assurance that they had received the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Their great joy made them into witnesses and they shared brochures, which increased their joy even more.

I can only marvel at God's great miracles and say with joy: *"Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness."* (Psalm 100:1-2 NKJV) *"For the joy of the Lord is your strength."* (Nehemiah 8:10 NKJV)

I see it like this: The Lord gave me the task of writer and coordinator. From "my" work God gave many others a second work of their own. This second work consists of intercessory prayer, translation, correction, prayer, financing, creating layouts, printing preparations, printing, establishing connections, distribution support, submitting testimonies, designing websites, etc. It is wonderful that the Lord gives a task to a group. Teamwork is more valuable than if each person would work alone. God wants to connect us with each other. I want to express deep gratitude for the wonderful contacts to sisters and brothers, which the Lord made possible. Some were only short-term, others longer-term or long-term. By and large, it is important for all those involved to know: Through God's grace I am a co-worker in God's greater plan. I work or rather Christ works through me to God's glory.

I have been allowed to experience God doing great and incredible things. Things, which go well beyond our possibilities. I can only praise and glorify Him and I want to continue serving Him with joy!

God wants to use everyone! In fact, He often chooses the weakest, who have a wonderful promise: *"... My strength is made perfect in weakness."* (2 Corinthians 12:9 NKJV)

God often chooses the weakest

Hudson Taylor, the great and famous missionary, through whom God established the China-Inland-Mission, once said when someone praised him for his great influence on the mission work:

“It seems to me that God looked over the entire earth to find someone, who was weak enough to do His work. When He finally found me, He said: ‘He is weak enough – he will do.’ All of God’s giants were weak people, who did great things for God, because they believed that God was with them.”

My prayer: “Father in heaven, please forgive us all for where we have acted self-sufficiently. Give us a humble heart, which is devoted to you with undivided surrender. Forgive us that we often expected only modest results. Please supply us daily with your Holy Spirit! Let us recognize the tasks that you planned for us during this time. Please give us revival and reformation and use us for the great finale of the gospel. Only you are worthy of honor and glory. AMEN.”

EXPERIENCES

PRAISE REPORT from Osaka/Japan:

Fast and pray for the Holy Spirit. Almost immediately ...

Sheri A.: We started church planting in the Osaka area in Japan. After one year, we still had no one attending worship or taking Bible studies. We decided to join the 100 Days of Prayer, and particularly fast and pray for the Holy Spirit during May. **Almost immediately** the Lord had us bump into a couple in a supermarket who were looking for a church, and seeking God. They immediately wanted Bible studies. Because of the epidemic, they were not working, so we had Bible studies every day, and they started attending worship services. Also, one of our neighbors started coming to church. So, we more than doubled our attendance on Sabbath, and a small church is sprouting! Praise God

100 Days of Prayer 2020, Prayer Focus (Day 100)

GC Ministerial Association July 4th, 2020.

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What's the difference between me working for God or God working through me?*

2. *What biblical examples are there of God using a person for a great work?*

3. *How was Paul able to do such incredible mission work?*

4. *What promises do we have that show us that the Lord wants to do great things through us?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... to see whether you are serving in your own strength or if God is working through you with His strength.
 2. ... for wisdom to discern the principles, which are manifested in the biblical examples of helping and serving.
 3. ... for an intimate relationship with God so that you can really be God's instrument.
 4. ... that you will recognize where under God's leadership you can support your environment and your church.

VALUABLE YEARS OF TRAINING

What significance does a good approach have in leading people to Jesus Christ?

First, I would like to share a few experiences that I had as a pastor in soul-winning. There were two particular reasons that motivated me to write these experiences down: 1. So that other people don't make the same mistakes I did and 2. So that others can profit from the positive experiences.

To encourage everyone, I would like to share that I – and two other brothers – were called to serve as pastors without any theological training, in other words as laymen. This happened because there was a great shortage of pastors at the time. Prior to that, I had learned a lot through 22 years of church work.

A few words about my background:

I come from an Adventist family. I was 17 years old when I was baptized. I was a very shy young man. Nevertheless, the church nominating committee recommended me as an assistant Sabbath school teacher. And as was common at the time, I wasn't courageous enough to contradict them. I overcame my shyness little by little through the Sabbath school work. Over the years, I served as Sabbath school leader, youth leader, personal ministry leader and church leader. Before I became a pastor, I worked in commerce for 22 years. The knowledge I gained there, proved to be very beneficial in my pastoral work. At one point, the company I worked for gave me the opportunity to expand my English language skills in England for a

year. Since I chose our Adventist school, Newbold College, I was also able to take some Bible subjects. However, at that time I had no idea that I would soon become a pastor.

My dear wife was a great support during my ministry. Her father had been a pastor and teacher. She already knew a lot of things from home; but not only that, she had also been of practical assistance in her home and local church. Then, God gave me further help in the form of a good friend and my brother-in-law – both of them were also pastors. Yes, I can say that God called me to a completely new task, but He had ensured that I was prepared in manifold ways and that I had the necessary support.

What is important in soul-winning?

I became a pastor when I was 38 years old. Some of my extensive efforts to win people for Christ, initially brought only weak results. These failures caused me to critically scrutinize my approach. And with God's help I gradually realized what I needed to do differently. As I put this new knowledge into practice, the results were very positive.

The following is what I learned:

As a rule, it is good to follow the following sequence:

- ▶ Introducing Jesus and helping people accept Him.
- ▶ Holding a discipleship course to initiate or deepen a relationship with Christ, to help their understanding of forgiveness of guilt and how to live a life in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ After this, the fundamental truths of the Bible can be covered.
- ▶ When a person is taught in this manner, then we are helping them make a decision for baptism and the church.

How far you can accompany an individual on this path, always depends on how open they are to the influence of the Holy Spirit.

How far Jesus' coworkers can accompany dear people on this path, will always be very variable.

My first momentous experience

When I began my pastoral work in 1968, the world-wide campaign *The Bible Speaks* was started. Those participating went from door to door taking a religious opinion survey. After the survey, people were offered a free

Bible. Anyone interested was immediately presented with a Bible. But the stipulation was that the Bible wasn't theirs to keep until they had completed the 24 Bible lessons. They were then given the first two lessons and these lessons would be picked up in a week or two – as desired – to be corrected and the next two lessons would then be left with them.

Fortunately, the church, which I was responsible for at the time, heartily joined in the project. Every Sabbath afternoon we went out with about 24 people in groups of two throughout the winter of 1968/69. After a few months, we had 700 people, who were studying these lessons. This mission activity was intended as preparation for a large evangelistic effort. The evangelistic series was held by the General Conference evangelist, Andrew C. Fearing, starting in April 1969. A certain brother, Reinhard Rupp, an evangelist from the Southern German Union, took over the continuation of the lecture series. He was followed by various other speakers, who held lectures every Friday, Saturday and Sunday; altogether there were approximately 100 lectures. By the grace of God, within two years 32 evangelistic attendees, who had found out about the series by various means, were baptized. I used the ten Bible study guides from Fordyce W. Detamore to help lead people to make a decision. (Today, I would recommend: Mark Finley, *Persuasion – How to help people decide for Jesus.*)

Unfortunately, there was only one woman from the baptismal candidates, who was from our 700 participants in the campaign The-Bible-Speaks. We asked ourselves what the reason could be for this “poor” result. After some time, we came to realize the following: We had predominantly done “postal work” and not made enough effort to seek personal contact. Furthermore, we were convicted that the Bible study guides dealt much too quickly with the doctrines – before the person had been led to Jesus. And not until later did I realize that our lack of the Holy Spirit also contributed towards our “sparse” results. We had made at least 10,000 house calls as part of The-Bible-Speaks campaign and despite our major efforts, we were then only able to bring **1 person** from our **700 contacts** to baptism.

I went into great detail in this experience, only because I want to spare other people a similar experience. And it is significantly easier to learn from other people's experiences than to make them yourself.

My second momentous experience

My next major campaign took place in 1971/72 in a different church. Again, we went from door to door and introduced ourselves to people with an opinion survey. But this time right after the survey, we asked **the well tried and tested question from the German booklet *Seize Life (Ergreife das Leben)*: “Assuming that you would die today, would you have assurance of eternal life with Jesus Christ?”**

As a rule, this led to us immediately reading the booklet together with them. The contents are a short summary of the plan of salvation in four steps and closes with a prayer of surrender. Some of the people were so touched that they gave us the addresses of their family members and asked us to visit them and to go through the booklet with them as well.

After we had gone over the booklet with the interested people, then we studied with them the five lessons published by the youth department of the General Conference on how to lead young people to Jesus. Only after that did we use The-Bible-Speaks series.

In total, we had 150 participants in The-Bible-Speaks course.

Next, we started a big evangelistic series of more than 52 evenings with the speaker Evangelist Kurt Hasel. At the end of the series 13 people were baptized; of these, **seven people** were from our **150 contacts**. The result of this second big campaign was many times better than the first one, where we had had one person baptized from the 700 participants.

My third momentous experience

The next great experience I had was in two churches in a large city in 1973/74. After I had held six evangelistic lectures together with the physician Dr. Waldemar Maretz in order to find interested people, we then invited them to a Bible study group. Seven guests and several church members attended. Together, we studied nine brochures from a *discipleship series*. It was a Bible-based and educationally well-prepared series on discipleship, which also included an introduction to *personal evangelism*. In this series there were two lessons on *Living with the Holy Spirit*. This series had been created to help deal with the three following fundamental problems:

- ▶ Many Christians don't have any certainty about their personal relationship with Christ.
- ▶ They are leading a life characterized by defeats and disappointments.
- ▶ They don't know how to share their faith in an effective manner.²

After this comparatively short discipleship series, we invited the seven guests to a long-running evangelistic series of more than 52 evenings. At the end 13 people were baptized, **five** of which were from our **seven contacts**.

This was the best outcome that God ever gave me in this kind of work. Let's compare again:

- ▶ 1 person from 700 contacts
- ▶ 7 people from 150 contacts
- ▶ 5 people from 7 contacts

As we can see, a well-thought-out strategy plays a decisive role in being able to win people for Jesus. Remember: Whoever buttons the first button wrong on a jacket, will never get it together right. In the end, he will have to unbutton everything and start over.

Whoever doesn't have a correct "start" in teaching about faith, usually cannot expect good results. And the next steps also have to be well-planned so that we don't turn off on a "byway". These "byways" may even be interesting, but they don't lead to the real goal – leading people to Jesus.

After this third experience, which was so positive, I always began by studying the discipleship series with new, interested individuals. Prior to this, or at another suitable time, I would go through the booklet *Seize Life* with them. (The booklet is chapter 7 in this book.) Only afterwards did I go through the standard Bible study series.

I learned that people, who first make a decision for Jesus, are motivated more and usually have more strength to accept and implement the teachings of the Bible.

² Author Dr. William Bright – The fundamental problems were identified with the use of comprehensive opinion surveys.

A special experience with youth from the church

In 1978 I invited the youth committee from a church in Saarland to study the discipleship series. At first the youth were quite skeptical. But this changed rapidly as they became happy and confident followers of Jesus through this study. When we wanted to convince the church to hold a seminar on these topics, the youth gave beautiful testimonies. The Lord also used this discipleship series to lead people to a joyful practice of faith.

While working in Saarland, I made a note of how many people prayed a prayer of surrender after going through the booklet *Seize Life*. There were 62 people and 30 of them were baptized. I want to praise and thank our Lord for this!

My experiences in Bad Aibling with the discipleship series and Bible studies

Starting in 1984 I was in charge of the retirement home in Bad Aibling (Germany). Between 1985 and 1994 we held a Better Living seminar every spring and fall. Sometimes we gave the seminar a different name, however the contents were the same. Each time it was a series of 11-12 evenings. By the help of God, we were able to win people for Christ at almost every seminar. Some guests and some employees from the retirement home even attended the seminar two or three times.

Each evening, the seminar had the following structure:

First, a **30-minute** talk was held on **health or family** or something like *Christians in occupational life*.

The **main part** of the evening was spent addressing **questions about discipleship** (series of nine booklets). We added other topics, such as *The Importance of the Local Church in our Life of Faith* and *The Allure of Superstition*. After that we would have standard Bible studies with those interested.

Starting in 1984 we offered a variety of vocational training at our retirement home: office management, housekeeping, chef, geriatric nurse assistant (1 year) and geriatric nursing (3 years with classes at a specialized vocational school).

In addition, we had five young men doing alternative service (in lieu of military service).

When hiring young people, we would ask them if they would also be interested in Bible classes and health classes besides their vocational training. We would ask them to understand that we wanted to reserve the

few apprenticeship positions for young people that were interested in the whole offer. We emphasized that they should only choose us if they were interested in the complete offer. Attending vocational classes, Bible classes and health classes would be mandatory for the duration of training.

(Today, I would add ethic classes as well; using the book of Salomon's Proverbs. This book contains biblical ethics for our private lives and our occupational lives. It not only points out correct conduct, but also the character prerequisites for it, which have to do with the fear of God.)

We told the young people that it was completely up to them what they did with their new knowledge about faith and health. Almost all the applicants decided they wanted to come. God marvelously provided us with a highly qualified Adventist lady, who held Bible classes and health classes and also took over most of the Bible seminars. She had pastoral training as well as a license for teaching housekeeping at a women's technical college.

We were delighted that at least one person was baptized each year. There were two years, in which we had seven baptisms each – many of them young employees. This was a good method to share our faith with young people. Thus, as an institution we were able to help fulfill Christ's great commission. So, it was the right method and successful because we led people to Jesus first.

Formation of a Support Group for *Global Mission*

In 1994 the church in Bad Aibling established a support group for global mission as an independent department of the church. (The report in German about the 25-Year-Anniversary is at www.missionsbrief.de: 25 Jahrfest). In 1990 the General Conference passed a plan for global mission. They promoted the idea of adopting an unentered one-million-region with the goal of starting the first church there. We volunteered as the church Bad Aibling. We were asked to get in touch with the conference in Tashkent-Uzbekistan. We ended up taking over the unentered "one-million-region" Navoiy in Uzbekistan. Due to God's blessing, we were able to establish a church there with almost 200 members. In addition, a church center was built.

Unexpected mission work evolved from these humble beginnings under God's leadership and by His grace. We learned a lot while working together with our administration and supporting missions. The Lord blesses collaboration. The following took place:

- ▶ Starting in 1994 **churches being established by pioneers** (full-time lay-missionaries). A **laymen-mission-school** was started for training pioneers in Navoiy-Uzbekistan. In only four years 42 lay-missionaries were trained; 41 of them began working as full-time lay-missionaries. Through their efforts **10 unentered “one-million-regions” in Uzbekistan were reached**. In each of these areas churches or groups were established. Due to their activities, **more than 500 people were baptized**. After these wonderful experiences our support group in Bad Aibling started to foster two projects in Turkmenistan starting in 2001/2002. Then in 2006 three projects in India were added. Ellen White said the following about personal and foreign mission work:

- ▶ “Our church members should feel a **deep interest in home and foreign missions**. Great blessings will come to them as they make self-sacrificing efforts to plant the standard of truth in new territory. **The money invested in this work will bring rich returns.**” (*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 49.3*)

“The home missionary work will be farther advanced in every way when a more liberal, self-denying, self-sacrificing spirit is manifested for the prosperity of foreign missions; **for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off.**” (*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 27.5*)

We experienced the truth of these quotes! The “reflex influence” for us was:

- ▶ Starting in 1999 churches were established in Germany by pastors, church members and pioneers. The churches, which participated in the foreign mission work in Uzbekistan for approximately 8 – 10 years (starting in 1995), planted daughter churches **only** during this time:
 - The church in Bad Aibling – in Feldkirchen Westerham
 - The church in Lindau – in Wangen, in Lindenberg and together with this church again in Isny
 - The church in Überlingen – in Pfullendorf and in Markdorf

The churches that took part in the foreign mission work, had been founded themselves approximately 100 years ago. It was only when they experienced the “reflex influence”, which came from their foreign mission work, did they progress in their “home mission work”. Further important tasks followed:

- ▶ Starting in 1994 a **mission-magazine *Missionsbrief* was published**. Its purpose is to inform and motivate in the areas of church planting, home and foreign mission work, revival and spiritual life. (Circulation: 13,000 copies for churches in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.)

- ▶ In 2003 the mission school in Navoiy-Uzbekistan was closed by the government’s command. On the basis of the outstanding results of the school – in four years 41 pioneers/lay-missionaries went into full-time mission work – we contacted Outpost Centers International in the USA and made a proposal to establish an institution that would help to buildup lay-missionary-schools worldwide – with the emphasis on health evangelism. After our consultation, a prayer chain with 150 people was formed and they were asked to pray until we had clarity in this situation – if God wanted us to have such an institution. After a short time, it was completely clear that our great God wanted such an institution. This led to the formation of **L.I.G.H.T.- Lay Institute for Global Health Training** based in Wildwood/USA. Purpose: services/consultation/aid in the worldwide erection of small health evangelism schools (training lasting 6-12 months) and holding one-month long health-evangelism courses. **Today, LIGHT is active in more than 100 countries**. About **5,000-6,000 people** have taken the 6-12-month health training at **mission schools** affiliated with LIGHT and more than **24,000 people** have taken the four-week intensive course (As of the end of 2019).

- ▶ Since 2012 **promotion of revival literature** with the outstanding 40-Days concept from Dennis Smith. This is the best spiritual-evangelistic concept that I have ever seen. We arranged for the translation and distribution of the *40-Days books vol. 1-5* from Dennis Smith, as well as *Steps to Personal Revival*, *Abide in Jesus* and *Spirit-filled Coworkers of Jesus* from Helmut Haubeil. In addition, the following websites have been set up: www.schritte-zur-persönlichen-erweckung.info and

www.steps-to-personal-revival.info in collaboration with the Adveda ministry. Therefore, it is now a supporting group for Revival and Global Mission.

- ▶ Starting in 2014 **setup of the website** www.gotterfahren.info, so that searching people can find a fulfilled life in a personal relationship with God. This website is run in collaboration with the Hope-Bible-Institutes in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Luxembourg. These institutes look after the searching people that contact them. This website was created in collaboration with Ilja Bondar from Adveda. The website is visited 3,000 to 5,000 times a month.

By God's grace, I have now managed the support group for 25 years. I can only repeatedly thank and praise our wonderful God for His leading and the many experiences, which we have been privileged to have. In addition, I can only thank our loving Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, that He gave me a fulfilled life both in my professional life and in retirement. With overflowing joy, I have been able to be part of God's work of worldwide revival in the last days of the world's history!

“But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:57-58 NIV)

Let us serve our wonderful Lord with Jesus Christ in our hearts and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. We want to testify of Christ in our words and deeds – to honor God, for the salvation and blessing of our fellowmen and for our own growth as followers of Jesus, for our own joy and fulfillment.

Prayer of Thanks: "Father in heaven, I want to praise and thank you for your wonderful guidance. Thank you that our local church trusted You and was willing to risk a step in global mission. I want to thank You for all the praying people, givers and helpers. Thank You for all those involved – the pioneers, churches, administrative offices and supporting ministries. You led us so that we could help in the salvation of people. Please continue to be with us and our mission work! Thank You that we were able to experience the "reflex influence"! We now ask You for a worldwide revival and reformation! Yes, we want the final great proclamation of the gospel to take place now, so that Jesus can come again soon! Father, praise and glory be Yours forever and ever! AMEN."

EXPERIENCES

President from a closed country in Asia

“I pray that this book will change our whole mission work. I am the president of a Missionfield. I just finished my first reading of the book *Steps to Personal Revival*. I am sorry that I did not know about this book before, but I am thankful that God showed me the book now.

Actually, I received this book as a gift from a friend. I didn’t expect much, but as soon as I opened this book, it started to impact my spiritual life. So last night I sent pdf files of this book to all our workers, and asked them to read it with their family members. Starting today, I will read it again with my wife, and I will also send this book to my children and daughter-in-law. While I was sharing this book with our workers, I realized that the translation in our two main languages is on the way. I pray that this book will change our whole mission work. We will publish it in our languages, so that our members will be blessed with presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The reason I am writing this email is to ask you a favor, if you could come and speak at our workers’ family retreat. If you can come and lead our workers, it would be really wonderful.

I pray that our Lord continues to use you and your book to bring revival to His church.” (H.J. EE090220 #148)

Over a thousand participants in internet prayer hour with “Abide in Jesus”.

I live in Curitiba-Paraná, Brazil. Last year our church distributed the book, *Steps to Personal Revival*. It's a wonderful book. I've read it three times already. I have already prepared three sermons on this message. I was very happy that a friend invited me to a prayer hour: every morning at 5 a.m. The prayer group studies the second book, “Abiding in Jesus”. Through these two books, more than a thousand brothers are now group members in one hour of prayer every day. Miracles and testimonies happen between us. When I entered this class a month ago we were 200 students. Every day God is bringing more brothers into the group who are looking for the Holy Spirit and preparing for Christ's return. Many people switch to from other countries through ZOOM. Now, after a month, we are already more than 1000 participants and the group is getting bigger and bigger. Thank God. Five ministers lead this class, which is dedicated to the search for the Holy Spirit. The class builds us up a lot. I thank you with all my heart for the books on the Holy Spirit. You have given me a new perspective on God and the Holy Spirit. Thank you very much for everything. (L.T.G. EE11112020 from Brazil 170)

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What steps are helpful in winning souls? Above all else, what should a person learn to know and love?*

2. *What is particularly important when sharing the gospel and what should be avoided?*

3. *Why is the topic discipleship so important and vital?*

4. *What can you learn from the experiences cited here?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... to gain ever better knowledge of God's character through Jesus Christ and to be transformed into His image.
 2. ... to discern the right way that you can reach people with the gospel.
 3. ... to become and remain true disciples of Jesus.
 4. ... for experiences in your work with God that will strengthen your faith.

“I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN”

What makes Jesus attractive to everyone in a unique way?

Why does He want us to lead other people to Him?

Why and how does Jesus make us into fishers of men?

How can I be an effective witness for Jesus?

In what way is Jesus of unique importance to everyone? What does Jesus do for me, which no one else can?

Jesus suffered for me, died for me and rose again. He was innocent and yet died for the entire guilt of my life. This is the greatest token of love there is. And although He rules the whole world, He lives for me. I want to thank Him for His inconceivable love for me. As my Redeemer and High Priest, He advocates His unique treasure of grace for me. He makes the greatest exchange with me: He assumes the entire guilt of my life. He paid the price for it on the cross. He gives me His righteousness. Thus, I can live without the burden of guilt.

He breaks the power of sin in my life so that I don't **have** to sin. He safeguards me from sin and the fallen angels. He gives us an abundant life and changes my character for the better step by step; He gives me talents, which enable me to serve Him. He frees me from injuries and bondage. He leads me in my life and gives me strength to trust God's love and to follow

His laws. He wrote me a love letter through His word, which gives me a firm foundation for my life and good advice for time and eternity. Normally, I would be condemned as a result of my guilt by God's judgment. Since Jesus is my intercessor and advocates His righteousness for me, I am pardoned from all my guilt. Without Him I would have to stand before conviction and enforcement of the sentence. Even now He gives me a fulfilled life. And at the resurrection or at my transformation, this life will continue in an eternal life of glory. Jesus is unique. No one can take His place.

Fellowship with Jesus is the most valuable relationship there is

When we reflect for a while, it will become clear that our trusting surrender to Jesus led to an intimate and incomparable friendship with Him. Do you have a friend more faithful than Jesus? Could someone replace this close relationship? Has the close love relationship with Christ become the foundation of a fulfilled life for you? I thank Jesus daily that He trusts me and loves me – that I am even in the middle of His love. I ask Him: Let our friendship always grow stronger and keep me in this love.

When your personal relationship with Christ is the most precious thing in your life, then what is the best thing you could do for another person?

What is the most invaluable help I can give someone? What is the greatest advantage that I can draw their attention to?

Is there anything more valuable for your loved ones, relatives, friends and acquaintances? Do you want to help them find the same important and superb friendship? It is the best thing you can do for another person. Jesus said: *"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* (John 10:10 NKJV) and *"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."* (1 John 5:12 NKJV) By God's grace, we may point others the way to a new and eternal life. This is a joy like no other! Hardly any other spiritual experience is so thrilling and rewarding as the "adventure of witnessing about Jesus" – who Christ is and what He means to me.

As a young business man, I learned from literature on success that: "Every person gladly lets themselves be influenced to their own advantage."

Once I adjusted to this in the sales of transportation services, I had notable success.

In the life of faith, it is important that our fellow men can see the good results of our relationship with Jesus in our life. Think of the healed demoniac. Jesus said to him: *“Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.”* (Mark 5:19 NKJV)

What is the most important prerequisite?

If I want to show other people the way to Jesus, then I have to have found Jesus myself first and be closely connected with Him. The Bible calls this “being in Christ”. This is mentioned 170 times in different forms in the New Testament. The Lord wants us to have clarity about our relationship with Him. *“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life ...”* (1 John 5:13 NKJV) Do I have assurance of salvation today? Am I sure that I am saved – not at the end of my life, but now? Robert Folkenberg said: No assurance, no mission. We can only witness credibly about our salvation through Christ, when we know that we are saved.

Jesus’ Wish

Jesus wants to reach other people with His love – namely through Christians, who are filled with the Holy Spirit. He wants to draw men, women and children to Himself through us. He wants to make you and me into a channel of His love. He wants to make people candidates for the Kingdom of God through you and me.

What do you think about Jesus’ wish?

Maybe you have never led someone to Jesus. But I am sure that you would like to. Where might the problem lay? There can be two reasons.

1. Do you know how to lead a purified, victorious and Spirit-led life?
2. Do you know how to share your faith about Jesus in an effective manner?

I didn’t know for a long time ...

Our situation is similar to Peter's. *"Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.' But Simon answered and said to Him, 'Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.' And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking."* (Luke 5:4-6 NKJV) Many can verify: We have caught nothing. But with Christ in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, we can cast out our nets again.

How can we become fishers of men?

Jesus said to Peter and Andrew – and it applies to us as well: *"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."* (Matthew 4:19 NKJV) According to another translation: *"Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people."* (GNT) We are called to follow Jesus in the power and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And He is responsible for making "fishers of men" out of you and me. He said: *I will make you fishers of men.* He does it, not you and me. He is the master and I am the apprentice.

How did Jesus make His apprentices into fishers of men?

I will now share portions of testimonies I received from people after they had started to daily surrender themselves to Jesus and to pray for the Holy Spirit. Please pay close attention to how Jesus was able to make them fishers of men.

- ▶ After 40-Days of prayer a pastor wrote: "Church members, who had been afraid to talk to strangers, suddenly spoke to people spontaneously." What was the turning point? A life in the Holy Spirit. (#532, 1)
- ▶ During the course of the day, God's Spirit testifies over and over again to my spirit that I am a child of God and I have the assurance of His guidance. The joy I have from this new Christian experience bubbles out of me and has motivated some church members to also read the booklet. (#532,37)
- ▶ The effects are overwhelming, because the new motivation and inner joy don't go unnoticed. During this time, I have had a lot of experiences. I also looked for opportunities to pass on what pervaded me. (#532,38)

- ▶ When I can tell about Jesus Christ, then I am filled with great joy. (#532, 46)
- ▶ I used to consider mission work an obligation. Now, it has become my desire to speak with people about Jesus. Jesus has not only aroused this need in me, but has also given me many opportunities. I want to praise and thank God for this. (#532,48)
- ▶ It is wonderful to experience how the Holy Spirit shows me and teaches me how Jesus loves and how concerned He is about the lost. I can speak freely about Jesus now, completely naturally so that almost everyone listens. The Holy Spirit arranges encounters and conversations often in minute detail, so that I can only marvel. Now, I wish that everyone around me could experience what I am. (#532, 54)
- ▶ Previously, the Holy Spirit only led me sporadically to witness. Now, it happens daily. I don't have to "prepare a speech", because God gives me the right words since only He knows the heart of the other person. (#532,57)

All of these experiences came about after these people started to daily ask by faith for the Holy Spirit and received Him. In addition, they surrendered their lives to Jesus daily and were ready to serve. I think that we can see in these testimonies how Jesus can start to make fishers of men out of us. He does it by living in us through the Holy Spirit. (See the booklet: *Abide in Jesus*, chapter: Jesus abiding in you.) A life with the Holy Spirit changes our attitude towards mission and gives us the basic abilities and joy for it.

Personal Efforts

Ellen White wrote: "Personal, individual effort and interest for your friends and neighbors, will accomplish much more than can be estimated. ... Go to your neighbors [friends, acquaintances] one by one, and come close to them till their hearts are warmed by your unselfish interest and love. Sympathize with them, pray for them, watch for opportunities to do them good." (E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, March 13, 1888) There is hardly any other spiritual experience that makes us so happy and fulfilled as the

experience of telling others about Christ and leading them to Him. (More about this later.)



UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS CAN I LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS?

Now, we want to learn about the conditions that make our life and our testimony for Jesus fruitful. We want to keep this overview as simple as possible. When we follow this, then our life will be richer and we will bring fruit for God in new ways.

Prayer: Let's pray daily: "Lord, make me willing to be ready for everything that You want. Please, arouse in me the desire to win lost people for You. AMEN."

My Relationship with Christ

When we are "in Christ", then the most important condition is already in place. It is crucial that we consecrate ourselves to Jesus every morning – with everything we have and are. Furthermore, we should daily pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit; we should pray with confidence and best using a promise. In this way, Jesus Christ lives in us, who said: *"Abide in Me, and I in you ... He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."* (John 15:4-5 NKJV) God's word invites us to self-examination: *"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 Corinthians 13:5 NKJV) God wants us to know our spiritual condition. When are we disqualified or incompetent? Our competence is supplied by Christ in us, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, incompetence shows that we don't have Christ in our "hearts" and we aren't filled with the Holy Spirit. The Bible calls this being carnal (living through normal human strength without the Holy Spirit, or without being filled enough with the Holy Spirit). (1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Romans 8:1-17) A car can't function without fuel and Christians can't function without the Holy Spirit. *"But you shall receive power [competence, provision] when the*

Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ...” (Acts 1:8 NKJV)

Now, we want to take a brief, yet careful, look at further points. I want to repeat: when you follow this, you will have a fulfilled life and you will bring fruit for God in new ways. Maybe you will leave the “nets” of your current career and win people for Jesus through Jesus.

1. SURRENDER TO CHRIST

Have I completely committed my life to Jesus Christ? Do I surrender myself to Him daily with everything I am and have? What significance does my surrender have?

(For more details see *Abide in Jesus*, chapter 2 Surrender to Jesus and chapter 3 Jesus abiding in you.)

Our complete surrender to Jesus Christ is the key to salvation, to a new life (John 3:1-21), to victory over sin (Romans 8:1-4), to being filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:16-17) and to assurance of salvation.

The Holy Spirit is Jesus’ crowning gift for His disciples. The Holy Spirit is the gift, which brings in its train all the other gifts. “But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. ... They talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. **They do not surrender the soul** to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies.” (E.G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 672.1) Many have not surrendered themselves to God – often out of ignorance – and determine their lives themselves. This can be the cause for a lack of the Holy Spirit. That’s why this portion is entitled: Commitment to Jesus Christ.

“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.” (E.G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.2)

Why surrender?

Surrender is clearly 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 [God] 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.” (E.G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 43.2-43.4)

Our surrender to God results in immeasurable blessing. God calls us to surrender, because He wants to heal us and set us free. From what? When Jesus is allowed to lead our lives, then He can free us from the tyranny of our ego, for example, jealousy, anger, bossiness, greed, addiction, rage, pride, conceit, discouragement, inferiority complexes, etc. Remember: Every person is their own biggest problem. You are your biggest problem. Only God can lead us to true freedom. But a potter can only form the clay that he has in his hands. That is why God needs our surrender.

Deliverance and Relief through Surrender

In this way, God also wants to free us from the power of sin (Romans 8:1-4) and give us divine guidance and protection (1 John 5:18). In addition, surrender makes our lives much simpler. E.G. White said: “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.” (*My Life Today*, p. 6.6, egwwritings.org)

Vital: Being filled with the Holy Spirit

Jesus gives us important instructions so that we can be His witnesses: “*But you shall receive power [competence, provision] when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me... to the end of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8 NKJV) Jesus **commanded** His disciples to wait to be filled with the Holy Spirit, before they started active work for Him (Acts 1:4). This shows that the Holy Spirit is an essential prerequisite for our witness. Jesus is in us through the Holy Spirit. He enables us to witness. “*For without Me you can do nothing.*” (John 15:5 NKJV) Jesus said: “*And they overcame him [the dragon] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.*” (Revelation 12:11 NKJV) We will be overcomers: by the blood of the Lamb – His sacrifice for us becomes effective through our trusting surrender to Jesus – and by the word of their testimony –

by telling others what Jesus has done for us. They did not love their lives to the death, shows us that a life of surrender to Christ was maintained till the end of their lives. Surrender means: living for Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:15).

Surrender – explained in detail

The main objective of ‘Surrender to Jesus’ is dealt with in detail in book two of the series *Steps to Personal Revival*. The book is entitled *Abide in Jesus*. Chapter two: “Surrender to Jesus”. It is highly recommended to re-read this chapter.

2. SPIRIT-FILLED

Jesus said in John 15:4 NIV: “*Remain in me, as I also remain in you.*” Whether Jesus remains in me, depends on me. He shows us very clearly what the effects of abiding in Christ are: “*He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*” (John 15:5-8 NKJV)

How do I abide in Jesus Christ?

We have a wonderful explanation of Jesus’ words “abide in me” in *The Desire of Ages*. It means:

- ▶ *a constant receiving of His Spirit* (Hence, daily asking for the Holy Spirit and receiving Him.)
- ▶ *a life of unreserved surrender to His service* (For this reason, we renew our surrender every morning.) (E.G. White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 676.2 egwwritings.org)

The Way to True Happiness

This two-part divine solution is the way to a happy life. Why? Jesus explained: “*These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.*” (John 15:11 NKJV)

Christ lives in us through these two steps (constant receiving of His Spirit and a life of unreserved surrender to His service) and it is the way to perfect joy. It is the way to true happiness.

“Daily” is the secret

Jesus said in Luke 9:23 that our discipleship is a daily matter. And 2 Corinthians 4:16 mentions that the inward man is renewed day by day. We should ask daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13 and Ephesians 5:18 in Greek: keep asking) and we should daily renew our surrender to Jesus Christ. I think this is the main objective of our morning worship for each of us. Jesus wants to accompany us throughout the day (see Matthew 6:33). Do you pray using promises, so that you have the assurance of receiving the Holy Spirit? (1 John 5:14-15; Mark 11:24; 2 Peter 1:3-4)

A Spirit-Filled Life in Detail

I would like to refer anyone, who would like to read in depth on this subject, to the book *Steps to Personal Revival*, especially the chapter “Are our Problems Solvable?”. It shows why a daily surrender to Jesus and daily asking for the Holy Spirit is important and necessary. You can also read the chapter “The Key to Practical Experience” in the same book, which shows how to pray using promises in order to have the assurance that our prayer for the Holy Spirit has been answered.

3. INTERCESSORY PRAYER

HOW CAN I PRACTICE SPIRIT-FILLED INTERCESSORY PRAYER?

Why should we pray for other people?

E.G. White says:

“Through much prayer you must labor for souls, for this is the only method by which you can reach hearts.” (*Evangelism*, p. 341.3) Thus, Spirit-filled intercessory prayer is the only way to people’s hearts.

- ▶ A pastor wrote: Another experience pertains to a German-Russian sister. She took part in the 40-Days devotional time and started to pray for her Russian speaking neighbors. When she told one of her neighbors that she was praying for her, the lady was very surprised and said that she was looking for a church that kept the Sabbath according to the Bible. This lady and several other neighbors came to the evangelistic meetings. Two of them were baptized. (#532,19)
- ▶ My prayer partner made great advances in her faith! Intensive prayer becomes a habit with the 40-Days repetition. Tomorrow, at least three of the five people we have been praying for, will come to the visitor’s Sabbath. (#532, 30)
- ▶ ... We discussed what we had read and then prayed for five special people. We had extraordinary experiences. A young person, who we had been praying for, began to take an interest in faith and started to ask questions about God. A relative of my prayer partner experienced God’s blessing when a problem was suddenly solved. I was able to talk about faith with a work colleague, even though I had thought it was completely impossible. God richly blessed us. (#532,53)
- ▶ A sister said after the 40-Days of prayer: “After intensive prayer, the Holy Spirit worked especially on my husband and led him back to the church after many months of absence. God can do great things!” (#532, 4 D)

These experiences show us that Spirit-filled prayer gives us many more answered intercessory prayers.

Jesus taught Intercessory Prayer

Jesus told the parable about a friend who comes at midnight on the topic of intercessory prayer (Luke 11:5-8). The friend receives an unexpected visitor late in the evening. He doesn't have anything to serve his guest. So, he hurries over to his neighbor and asks for some bread. He is fully confident that his friend will help him. And indeed, he does get bread. Jesus made it clear that we don't have anything ourselves. We have to turn to our divine friend, so that we can receive the bread of life for other dear people. Then Jesus said: *"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you ..."* (Luke 11:9 NKJV) With this sentence He leads up to His great, loving and urgent call – that we should at all costs ask for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is also very important for our intercessory prayer.

Pray in the Holy Spirit / Pray in the Name of Jesus

God's word invites us to *"pray in the Holy Spirit"*. (Jude 20 NKJV) We should therefore pray imbued with the Holy Spirit. That is the same as praying in the name of Jesus. We pray in the name of Jesus, when we live in complete surrender to Him and are willing to follow our Lord in everything. There are great promises for this kind of prayer:

- ▶ *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father."* (John 14:12 NKJV)
- ▶ *"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."* (John 14:13-14 NKJV)
- ▶ *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."* (John 15:7 NKJV)
- ▶ When we pray with a prayer partner, then we have an additional promise from Jesus in Matthew 18:19 (NKJV): *"Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven."*
- ▶ *"The Lord is not ... willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."* (2 Peter 3:9 NKJV)

- ▶ *“If anyone sees his brother (or sister) sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.”* (1 John 5:16 NKJV)

Additional promises for our children and relatives:

- ▶ *“But thus says the Lord: ‘Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible be delivered; for I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children.’”* (Isaiah 49:25 NKJV)
- ▶ *“So they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’”* (Acts 16:31 NKJV)

We can find in the *40-Days books vol. 1, 2 and 3* by Dennis Smith in the ‘introduction and overview’ further promises for intercessory prayer: See Appendix A: Promises for Intercessory Prayer

God’s word stands firmer than the mountains

When Christ is in us and we pray using promises, then we can be certain that the Lord answers our prayers. Then this applies to our prayers too:

“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11 NKJV)

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” (Jesus in Matthew 24:35 NKJV)

Prayer List

Do you want your relatives, friends and neighbors to find Christ? Then you should start a prayer list and pray regularly for them. Count on the reliability of God’s word and use promises.

How often should we pray for them?

Many earnest Christians have an extensive intercessory prayer list. Sometimes, I have the feeling that our prayers may become superficial, when we try to pray for all of them every day. I wonder: Wouldn't it be better to pray for a small number every day – maybe even several times during the day – and then pray for the others once or a few times a week, so that we can bring at length their concerns and needs before God?

How many people should I have special prayer for?

Dennis Smith³ and Josef Kidder⁴ suggest that we should pray for five unreached people. We should establish contact with them and cultivate our friendship. Joseph Kidder says: “I have always encouraged church members to pray regularly for five people, to meet their needs in a helpful and friendly manner and to love them. As a result of this kind of prayer, I have witnessed many people accepting Jesus as their Lord. Why don't you pray for five people, like I do, and then see what God will do for them?”

When should I inform someone that I am praying for them?

When should we tell the person concerned that we are praying for them? There are varying views on the subject. Some recommend telling them from the outset. Others suggest telling the person after you have been praying for them for three or four weeks.

We could tell them that our church (prayer group, care group) has planned six weeks for a special time of prayer. In connection with this, we have been asked to pray for five people. “And I would like to pray for you. Do you have a special request for your health, family or work, which I can pray for?”

3 Dennis Smith, *40-Days* (book one) – *Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming*, in this book: Part Two: The Holy Spirit and Prayer, pp. 47 f

4 S. Joseph Kidder, ... *und sie wächst doch! Vier entscheidende Faktoren für das Wachstum von Gemeinden* (Lüneburg 2014), S. 101, 131, 124, 136 – English: *The Big Four – Secrets to a Thriving Church Family*, 2011 R&H

Intercessory Prayer and Freedom

Another problem to consider: God neither forces nor manipulates a person when we pray for them. The Lord has given every person freedom and completely respects that. But – I have experienced personally and my dear wife in a different situation, how the Lord redirected us with new insights. We had new thoughts. We were then suddenly willing to do what we hadn't wanted to do before. We can read in Acts 16:14 (NKJV) about the business woman Lydia in Philippi and how *“the Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul”*.

It is our responsibility to pray that other people will find Christ and to point them to Him. God alone can produce faith in their hearts through the Holy Spirit and transform their thinking and life. But one thing we should remember: normally, only a Spirit-filled person, who prays, can expect their prayers for the salvation of their relatives or other people to be answered.

Answered Intercessory Prayers

I have received numerous testimonies, in which church members mention such answers to prayer after they started to pray in the Holy Spirit and to live in close connection with Jesus. Examples:

- ▶ An older man from an Adventist family attended church and other church meetings quite regularly. After many years, he finally decided to be baptized. (#532,4 O.)
- ▶ The two people, who I give Bible studies to, have accepted the Sabbath. (#532,4 M.)
- ▶ God didn't keep us waiting. He gave us wonderful answers to prayers during the 40-Days. Someone, who we had been intensively praying for, re-established contact with the church after a long absence. It was a moment of great joy. (#532,13)
- ▶ Her youngest son had a lot of problems with the church and so during the 40-Days of prayer, she and her prayer partner prayed especially for him. The result was that her son changed his life and started to prepare for baptism. (#532,16)

- ▶ A man, who was unwilling to forgive, became mentally ill, lost his job and developed suicidal thoughts. His marriage also failed. This condition lasted over a year. He was won through prayer and was able to get competent pastoral counseling. Two 40-Days prayer partners prayed for him daily. The turning point came after two months. He was able to forgive, he is reunited with his wife and children, his joy for life has returned and he can work again. (#532,17)

Three detailed testimonies share how decades-old tensions and not wanting anything to do with each other was resolved because of the intercessory prayer during the 40-Days of prayer. (more www.steps-to-personal-revival.info: – Testimonies: No. 3/40, 4/52, 7/84 a und 7/84 b.)

May God work just as intensively on the hearts of the people you are praying for.

HOW DO I MAINTAIN CONTACTS?

The *40-Days books* by Dennis Smith have some valuable advice for maintaining contacts under the section “introduction and overview”.

He says: The following list provides some suggestions of what you can do for people on your prayer list so that they feel they are important to you. Add further ideas to the list as God leads you. We also added some suggestions. You can find the list in Appendix B: Suggestions of how to reach out to people.

Our Goal:

To be a blessing for others through our prayers, our example, our contact as well as by giving suitable suggestions and material, so that they can also enjoy a fulfilled life and are prepared for the soon second coming of Jesus. Under God's leadership we want to:

- ▶ Encourage people, who aren't searching for God, to start searching for Him.
- ▶ Lead people, who are searching, to Jesus.
- ▶ Challenge people, who have found Jesus, to a deeper commitment.

There is very good material available for this purpose. We will take a look at these materials in chapter 9: Practical helps.

May the Lord give us grace to become fishers of men through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and through His training. *"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

"All around us are the young, the impenitent, the unconverted, and what are we doing for them? Parents, in the ardor of your first love, are you seeking for the conversion of your children, or are you engrossed with the things of this life to such an extent that you are not making earnest efforts to be laborers together with God? Do you have an appreciation of the work and mission of the Holy Spirit? Do you realize that the Holy Spirit is the agency whereby we are to reach the souls of those around us?" (E.G. White, *Selected Messages, book 1*, p. 190.1)

An effective witness means:

I prayfully take the initiative so that I can speak about Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit – I leave the results up to God.⁵

Revival leads to Mission work

"The Holy Spirit will come to all who are begging for the bread of life to give to their neighbors." (E.G. White, *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6*, p. 90.1)

5 *Wirksames Zeugnis – Wie macht man das?* (Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1971), p. 33

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What does Jesus do for me, which no one else can? Why is it the greatest advantage that there is, when I show someone the way to Jesus?*

2. *How can we become fishers of men?*

3. *What does "surrender to Jesus" mean? What does it look like in practice?*

4. *What possibilities for maintaining contact can you implement in your surroundings?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... that God will make you increasingly aware of what Jesus means to us.
 2. ... that God can make you Spirit-led fishers of men.
 3. ... that God will show you how you can personally surrender to Jesus.
 4. ... for courage and wisdom to discern the possibilities of how you can maintain contacts and be a blessing in your surroundings.

EXPERIENCE

Reconciliation within entire communities

Experience of another church in Guadeloupe / Caribbean

“The 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 to 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 non-forgiveness 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 gave a positive echo and were very grateful for this brochure, which came for them. Here, too, the members began to perform the 10 prayer and fast days individually. Finally, the desire arose 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 people, but gradually there were more 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 also hope for minefields.” (B. & F. H. #84b Guadeloupe)

A church member from Southern Germany wrote:

My friend and I are currently studying *40-Days Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming* for the third time, alternating with the book *Steps to Personal Revival*. Before we discovered this material, our faith experience and prayer life weren’t what they 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 reveals how His Spirit is working – on us and on the people we are praying for. M. S.

WHY SHOULD WE LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS FIRST?

Good reasons for the correct order:

10 reasons why we should lead people to Jesus first, before we teach them about the doctrines in the Bible.

Sequence: First Jesus, then discipleship and the Holy Spirit, biblical doctrines, baptism, training.

REVIEW

The last topic was about Jesus' words: "*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*" (Matthew 4:19 NKJV) Jesus invites us to become His apprentices. He wants to train us to become fishers of men. He wants to train us personally. We couldn't ask for a better master. It is a joy when we become Jesus' apprentices and our abilities are developed. The core of the training: Jesus Himself will develop these abilities through us and in us. The condition is our willingness to follow Christ. How?

1. By daily consecrating our lives to Him – with everything we are and have – and
2. By daily asking by faith (praying using promises – 2 Peter 1:4) for the Holy Spirit.

We shouldn't think that our "apprenticeship" will be completed someday. There is an adage that says: "A master is, who devises something. A journey-man is, who can do something. An apprentice is, everybody." The master and the journeyman also have to continue learning. We will also never stop learning about the science of saving souls.

What is the highest and best that we can do for a person?

We certainly will become more and more aware that our personal and close relationship with Jesus is the most valuable relationship that we can have. Jesus wants to give us an "abundant life" now in this life (John 10:10). After His second coming, He will give us eternal life – in God's glorious kingdom (John 3:16). There is no substitute for this vital relationship. *"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."* (1 John 5:12 NKJV) When the joy of this relationship fulfills us and we have valuable experiences with Jesus, then we will realize that this is also an **irreplaceable and valuable relationship for our fellowmen**. The highest and best that we can do for someone is helping them experience this enriching friendship. This relationship is more valuable than gold.

How do we become fishers of men?

We become witnesses for Jesus when He lives in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. In the last chapter, we saw in the personal experiences how strongly our interest for others is kindled, when Christ lives in us through the Holy Spirit. We want to hear two more testimonies:

A person wrote after they had been daily praying for the Holy Spirit for a time:

"We have observed that our prayers have made a difference in our life. And we couldn't keep this to ourselves. Every chance we got, we felt the urge to tell about it. It was important to me to motivate other people to have the same experience. The effect was forthcoming. Some church members were infected by our enthusiasm." (#432,13)

Another person wrote:

"Subsequently, her son changed his life and he started to prepare for baptism. I was infected by her enthusiasm and now I am praying for a prayer partner and have started to read the two books." (#432,16)

What life work do you and I have?

Does it consist of leading people to Jesus? It says the following in the book *Christian Service*: “To save souls should be the life work of everyone who professes Christ.” (E.G. White, *Christian Service*, p. 10.1)

Jesus Himself gave us the commission, when He said: “*As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.*” (John 20:21 NKJV) In addition, we know His commands: “*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.*” (Matthew 28:19 NKJV) “... *you shall be witnesses to Me ...*” (Acts 1:8 NKJV) “... *and I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.*” (Isaiah 49:6 NKJV)

Many have strived in this direction. Sometimes with success, often without success. We have to admit that many of us have fallen very short of Jesus’ commission. We should take an honest inventory here. Many need to acknowledge as did Peter: “... *we have toiled all night and caught nothing.*” (Luke 5:5 NKJV) Are the results satisfactory for me? Did I fulfill the prerequisites, which we discussed in the last chapter? Was the problem possibly caused by the lack of the Holy Spirit? Shouldn’t we respond as Peter did: “... *nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.*” (Luke 5:5 NKJV)

Prerequisites for Fishers of Men

We want to briefly review the prerequisites:

- ▶ Have I completely surrendered my life to Jesus? Do I want to obey Him and His word in everything? Have I daily renewed my relationship with Him through complete surrender?
- ▶ While doing this work, was I filled with the Holy Spirit? Did I daily ask by faith for the Holy Spirit and receive Him? (It’s best to pray using promises, see 2 Peter 1:4.)
- ▶ Did I actively pray for the person, before I did something for him/her?
- ▶ Did I look for personal contact and show genuine interest in the life of the person? (Suggestions how to do this are in the Appendix B Suggestions of how to reach out to people and in the *40-Days books, vol. 1 and 2* by Dennis Smith)

A Richly Blessed Method

In this chapter and the next, we will take a look at a method, which has been extensively tested in practice. It will give us new courage to once again proceed in the name of Jesus.

First of all, we want to pray often or daily:

“Father in heaven, make me willing to gladly do everything You want. Please create in me the desire to help win a lost world for You.”

Yes, by the grace of God, Jesus can lead people to Himself through you and me. He accomplishes this through Spirit-filled disciples, in whose hearts He lives through the Holy Spirit. Don't consider this work for others as a burden. Our guiding principle should be:

I take the initiative through prayer to testify of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. I leave the results up to God.

Our work will never be a burden with this attitude. Rather, it is a privilege to work for Jesus. It is a wonderful work, when we can lead people closer or completely to Jesus. That is the best and most important thing we can do for other people.

WHY SHOULD WE LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS FIRST?

Why should we lead people to Jesus first, before we discuss biblical doctrines? At this point, I would like to emphasize again how vital it is for our work that we are in Christ – that Christ is in our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:16-17). The Bible calls this spiritual state “*being in Christ*” or “*Christ in you*” (Colossians 1:17) and also “*born again*” (John 3:3) or “*born of God*” (1 John 5:18). I want to stress once again what E.G. White masterfully summarized about Jesus' words in John 15:4:

“‘Abide in Me, and I in you.’ This means:

- ▶ **a constant receiving of His Spirit,**
- ▶ **a life of unreserved surrender to His service.”**

(Desire of Ages, p. 676.2, egwwritings.org)

Every morning we can receive the Holy Spirit at our request by faith (Galatians 3:14). We effectively receive Him, when we believe that *while we are asking* that we have already received Him (1 John 5:14-15; Mark 11:24). Some people have a problem with this. But it is a fact: As long as we pray in general terms, we usually only hope that we have received the Holy Spirit. But in this case, “hoping” isn’t enough. That’s why I recommend: pray using a promise, so that you “know” that you have indeed received the Holy Spirit. Praying with promises strengthens our complete trust. Please, if necessary, reread the book *Steps to Personal Revival*, particularly the chapter “The Key to Practical Experience: praying with promises”. This chapter discusses in detail praying with promises. Praying with promises is recommended quite clearly in 2 Peter 1:4: *“By which [knowledge of Jesus and an intimate relationship with Him] have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature ...”* (NKJV)

The second point “a life of unreserved surrender to His service” can be daily realized, when we honestly and earnestly pray: “Father in heaven, I surrender myself with everything that I am and have.”

WHY SHOULD WE LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS FIRST, BEFORE WE TEACH THEM BIBLICAL DOCTRINES?

When you button the first button wrong, then it is difficult. Maintaining the correct order always brings advantages. It makes it easier for these dear people, who you want to lead to Jesus, to become a Christian. In addition, it promotes our joy, strength and our whole life.

1. We want to lead people to Jesus first, because we don't want to recommend an impossible path to anyone.

Usually, the dear person that we want to lead to Christ, isn't living in the power of the Holy Spirit. When we teach someone the doctrines in the Bible, then we pray and hope that they will accept them and put them into practice. But usually this person, who hasn't yet been filled with the Holy Spirit, is lacking motivation and strength. As a rule, he isn't a spiritual person yet. The Bible says in Romans 8:7 the following about such a person: "... for they do not obey God's law, **and in fact they cannot obey it.**" (GNT)

If we were to teach them biblical doctrines at this point of time, then we would only build a "mountain" for these dear people, which they cannot overcome. We would lead them to be carnal Christians, meaning living a Christian life in their own strength. This person has only normal human strength and abilities available. But when someone has received Christ and been filled with the Holy Spirit, then he has much better conditions for accepting and living out the biblical doctrines.

At this juncture, I would like to recommend reading the book *Steps to Personal Revival*, the chapter "What is the center of our problems?" and the portion "What is the main obstacle in carnal Christianity?"

How joyful obedience can be is covered in the book *Abide in Jesus*, the chapter "Obedience through Jesus".

2. We want to lead people to Jesus first, because they are lost without Jesus.

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." (1 John 5:12 NKJV) Jesus said: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* (John 14:6 NKJV) The Bible says clearly: *"Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us."* (Acts 4:12 GNT)

3. We want to lead people to Jesus, because they experience a valuable renewal through Him.

Jesus gives us here a new, worthwhile life and after He comes again He will let us be partakers of the divine life for eternity. *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation ...”* (2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV) *“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”* (John 10:10 NKJV) Paul prayed: *“... that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”* (Ephesians 3:19 NKJV) *“For in Him [Jesus] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him ...”* (Colossians 2:9-10 NKJV)

4. We want to lead people to Jesus, because He gives us true freedom.

Jesus said: *“Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”* (John 8:36 NKJV) Jesus frees us from guilt. This means that we can live without the burden of guilt. He frees us from the tyranny of our ego, i. e. from the depravity of our old nature (resentment, envy, anger, pride, inferiority complexes, dissatisfaction, doubt, pettiness, etc.) from addictions, from occult ties, etc.

A word about being freed from our old depraved nature. I feel that asking **daily** to be freed from this character is important, because 2 Corinthians 4:16 says: *“... yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.”* The apostle Paul said about himself: *“... I die daily.”* (1 Corinthians 15:31 NKJV) And Martin Luther is supposed to have said that he drowned the old Adam, but “oh dear, the guy can swim.” I pray daily to be freed with the promise in John 8:36. At the moment, I can’t say if this will always be necessary or only for a certain period of time.

However, we can be completely free from the bondage of outward things through one prayer, such as smoking or alcohol.⁶ When someone has become free, then new temptations still lurk all around them. That is why it is important to lead the freed person to an intimate relationship with Jesus, to a life in the power of the Holy Spirit. That is also why, for example, people at Alcoholics Anonymous are taught to daily surrender their life to God, so that they can remain free.

⁶ See *Victory over Tobacco & Alcohol* www.Steps-to-personal-revival.info: *Letters to Andrew No. 5 – Missionary tools* .

Remember that the power of sin will be broken in our lives (Romans 8:1-2; Galatians 5:16). Jesus protects us from sin. Satan cannot touch us (1 John 5:18). Jesus wants to give our fellowmen all of this through us.

“... where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (2 Corinthians 3:17 NKJV)

5. We want to lead people to Jesus, because God’s love compels us to.

The Holy Spirit fills born again Christians with God’s love (Romans 5:5) and moves their hearts so that they want to tell others about Jesus. “*Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others ... For Christ’s love compels us ... And he (Christ) died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*” (2 Corinthians 5:11,14-15 NIV)

We are given the Holy Spirit for two reasons:

1. For the transformation of our characters- the Bible calls this the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7).
2. And to be witnesses for Jesus. “*But you will receive power (also ability) when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses.*” (Acts 1:8 NIV) – This is the reason we receive spiritual gifts.

Day 23

6. We want to lead people to Jesus, so that they won’t be condemned by God’s judgement.

Is it really necessary to include the message of the judgement? The message of the judgement challenges us: Commit yourselves to Jesus so that you don’t have to be condemned in God’s judgement.

The Bible says:

“*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*” (2 Corinthians 5:10 NKJV)

“*Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him ...*” (Revelation 14:7 NKJV)

The first phase of the judgement – the judgement before the second coming – already started in 1844 according to Daniel 8:14. Naturally, the people, who lived in ancient times, are examined first. And since then, the investigations are moving towards the cases of the end times.

“Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear⁷ lest any of you seem to have come short of it.” (Hebrews 4:1 NKJV).

This text urges us to contemplation: am I saved? and *“Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others ...”* (2 Corinthians 5:11 NIV) The fear of God and the knowledge of the coming judgement should motivate us to want to save other people.

E.G. White gives a very good explanation of the term “fear”:

“The Lord would have his people trust in him and abide in his love, but that does not mean that we shall have no fear or misgivings. Some seem to think that if a man has a wholesome fear of the judgments of God, it is a proof that he is destitute of faith; but this is not so. **A proper fear of God, in believing his threatenings, works the peaceable fruits of righteousness, by causing the trembling soul to flee to Jesus.** Many ought to have this spirit today, and turn to the Lord with humble contrition, for the Lord has not given so many terrible threatenings, pronounced so severe judgments in his word, simply to have them recorded, but he means what he says. ... Paul says, *‘Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.’* ...” (R&H, Oct. 21, 1890, par. 6)

How can we find a balance between the different statements about fear? For example, we have in 1 John 4:18: *“There is no fear in love.”* (NKJV)

When I think of Romans 5:5, then I realize: *“... the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”* (NKJV) Christ lives in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. When He is in our hearts and remains there, then He represents us in the judgement. He says in John 5:24 NKJV: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”*

Two more comments on this text: “Believing” is vital. I once searched for the following in the internet: “Belief according to the Bible”. Four terms came up. In the Bible belief means: “to entrust oneself”, “to bind your existence to someone else”, “to rely on someone” and “to be loyal to someone”. It’s about this relationship of faith with Jesus. The life of each individual will be examined in God’s judgement. But, for those who

⁷ It doesn’t have to do with reverence here, but rather fear, misgivings. NKJV: *“Let us fear”*; RSV: *“Let us fear”*

believe Jesus, for those who are in Christ, there is no condemnation, because Jesus bears their guilt.

This shows us that it doesn't suffice to only speak about God's love – although it is naturally our main objective. We should also point out that one day God will hold everyone accountable. We shouldn't omit the judgement message. But it is important to pass this on with wisdom. At the same time, we should make it clear that with the judgement, all evil will end and hence every dispute, every illness and all pain will be eradicated. There will be no more distress or death! In addition, we should point out that everyone, who lives closely connected to Christ, doesn't need to have any fear of God's judgement. God promises every person, who is in Christ, acquittal at the trial.

In the Russian campaign during WWII, the following took place: German soldiers were in the frontline trenches and knew that they lay opposite the Russians. A troop of German soldiers joined them and momentarily didn't recognize where the frontline was. They would have gone directly into the arms of the Russians, if a German soldier in the trench hadn't yelled "stop". Only then did they realize the danger they were in. The Germans in the trenches wanted to save their comrades.

We are also obligated to warn our fellowmen about God's judgement and we should show them the solution to this problem. We tell people out of love that there will be a judgement. They then have a chance to protect themselves. If we were to withhold this from them, then they could one day bitterly reproach us. It is our duty to show our fellowmen an alternative so that they can make a good decision.

7. Because witnessing for Jesus is also a help for us.

Speaking about Jesus is a help for us. Those, who speak about Jesus, grow in faith. Speaking about Jesus results in repercussions for me. We will notice how this motivates us to have a deeper prayer life and to keep finding new insights in God's word.

When we speak of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, then we are sowing love, joy and peace. According to the divine principle of planting and harvesting, we will harvest what we have sown. We will even harvest more. A harvest is normally a multiple of the seed. Jesus said in the parable of the sower: thirtyfold, sixtyfold, 100fold (Mark 4:20). For example, when we sow love, we will harvest love, but always more than

we originally sowed. *“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”* (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NKJV)

8. Because we can be God’s ambassadors by bearing witness of Jesus.

It is a great privilege to be God’s ambassador. *“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.”* (2 Corinthians 5:20 NKJV) Every ambassador considers it a great honor to represent his country, his president or his king. As Jesus disciples, we are ambassadors of the King of kings, the Lord of lords. This is the highest honor we can have.

9. Because the Holy Spirit gives us divine abilities and authority.

E.G. White commented on Acts 1:8: *“Jesus says, ‘Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me.’* It is the union of the Holy Spirit and the testimony of the living witness that is to warn the world. The worker for God is the agent through which the heavenly communication is given, and the Holy Spirit gives divine authority to the word of truth.” (RH, April 4, 1893, par. 9) Here, the word “power” means: power, empowerment, authorization. It means that the Holy Spirit empowers and authorizes us to be witnesses for Jesus. Have we thought enough about the fact that we receive abilities and authority from the Holy Spirit?

10. We want to lead people to Jesus, because Christ has given us a commission to do this.

Jesus said in His parting words:

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20 NKJV) We call Jesus’ words the Great Commission.

Does Jesus expect us to obey His commission? Please remember that our obedience by faith is expected. It has three aspects:

1. My decision
2. My steps of preparation
3. God accomplishes

Let's look at Daniel as an example (Daniel 1:8-9):

1. Daniel purposed in his heart. Daniel made a decision.
2. His steps of preparation: What could he do himself? He prayed together with his friends about the problematic situation. In addition, he thought about what else he could do. The result: He made a petition to the chief steward.
3. *“Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.”* (Verse 9 NKJV)

My willingness to be obedient always comes first: Do I want to obey Jesus' commission? After I have made a positive decision, then I start the steps of preparation, which are within my means. I pray for the person, seek contact and maintain personal contact.

(When Christ lives through the Holy Spirit in our hearts, then He will assist us step by step.)

God wants to lead these people to salvation! He will work on their hearts.

Maybe there are even more reasons why we want lead people to Jesus. But in conclusion, we want to remember what many soul winners have learned:

I want to be clear again that training, material and methods are completely worthless, if we don't act in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit.

And now comes the big question:

How can I speak about Jesus?

There are lots of different ways and conversational approaches to use in speaking about Jesus. **One** way, which has been tried and tested, is starting with a small workbook. In the next chapter, we will discuss in detail how to use a workbook.

Our next chapter is:

How can we lead people to Jesus?

What are 12 good reasons for using such a workbook? What practical experiences can we draw from? How can I work with a tried and tested workbook?

At the moment, we only want to take a quick glance at it. The critical point for most of us is finding the right way to start a conversation. How can I casually and authentically speak about faith? What opening question leads tactfully and directly to the main point?

- ▶ How can I introduce someone to Jesus and show them a simple outline of the plan of salvation?
- ▶ How can I make a spiritual diagnosis, so that the individual knows where they are standing and where they want to go in the future? This is important to me so that I can give specific support.
- ▶ How can I help someone, who already wants to accept Jesus?

Thank God, that there are good answers to these questions. They are all in the brochure “Seize Life”. Anyone can learn to use this brochure. Actually, this method has been used for years around the world – with great success! It is important that many more people use it for the salvation of others and for the joy of the helpers.

We want to thank our Lord with all our heart that He makes us willing and able – to lead people to Jesus as well.

Prayer: “Father in heaven, make me willing to want everything you want. Please, awaken the desire in me to help with the great task of winning a lost world for You. Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You will lead me with Your good Spirit. AMEN.”

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What sequence should we follow, when we want to be effective fishers of men?*

2. *What are the conditions for being a fisher of men?*

3. *Name a few reasons, why we should lead people to Jesus first, before we teach them biblical doctrines.*

4. *What do you find valuable in the following principle? I prayfully take the initiative to witness about Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. I leave the results up to God.*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... to be able to authentically witness for Jesus.
 2. ... that God will make me ready to want to gladly do everything God wants.
 3. ... to understand why it is so vital to lead people to Jesus first.
 4. ... for wisdom to correctly assess what people, whom I am in contact with, need spiritually.

HOW CAN WE LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS?

*Through reading a Bible lesson
together using Letter to Andrew No. 13. Seize life
through a personal relationship with God*

We first consider the two crucial steps in chapters 7 and 8. Then in chapter 9 the order in which we can usually use the Letters to Andrew.

Why is it good to use a booklet?

The Adventist Evangelist Eiden K. Walter wrote to me: “As far as I am concerned, I do not want to take these steps – leading people to Jesus – without a booklet. It is so helpful. It gives confidence to the beginner and it serves a very practical purpose.

The twelve advantages of a booklet are:

1. It contains the key messages of the gospel.
2. The reader doesn't only have individual, often misleading statements in front of them, but also has the gospel in context. It is a simple outline of the plan of salvation.
3. A good structure makes the gospel easier to understand. Your conversation partner not only has something to listen to, but also has something to look at at the same time (audiovisual aid).
4. It helps us to stay on topic and to direct the conversation.
5. It starts out positive, i.e. with God's love for us.
6. It leads to implementing what is heard in a natural way.
7. There are suggestions for growth and it shows the importance of the church.

8. You can concentrate better on the person you are talking to because you know what you want to say.
9. It helps you to start a conversation about questions of faith. For example, you can simply say: I have discovered a booklet that summarizes the key messages of the Bible. Are you already acquainted with it?
10. It also helps those, who are not yet familiar with the Bible, to explain the gospel to others and to lead them to a personal relationship with Christ.
11. You can give it to the other person after your conversation with them. You should do that too! Most people keep it in their Bible.
12. At the same time, the participant who is led to Jesus learns how to show others the way to Him.

There are even more good reasons. Try it out after praying and then prayerfully put it into practice. Learning by experience is better than studying. If possible, I would never discuss this important step with anyone without this booklet.”

A few selected experiences:

Experience 1: “I was able to have only one conversation with a 40-year-old manager. To start, I asked key question number 1 and she was willing to go through the brochure with me. Unfortunately, she wasn’t willing to accept Jesus that day. However, when parting, she said: ‘I want to thank you most sincerely. For the first time in my life, I now know what the Christian faith is about.’ At the moment, this lady wasn’t ready yet. But at least she knew after our conversation the way to Jesus and could take that path anytime in the future. Of course, I left the booklet *Seize Life* there for her.”

Experience 2: “During a trip from Bagdad to Mossul in Iraq, I shared a sleeping coach compartment with an Iraqi student. We were able to communicate in English. After the first question, he also wanted to know how he could have assurance. In the end, he was ready for a prayer of surrender to Jesus Christ. I had explained to him, what such a prayer should include and asked him if he wanted to pray such a prayer. He said that he would pray along those lines, but that he couldn’t remember everything. I should pray sentence for sentence and he would repeat after me. So that is what we did. I wished him God’s rich blessings on this path to Jesus and called

his attention to the fact that there was an Adventist church in his home city of Bagdad.”

Experience 3: “During my first visit to a new church district, I got to know a nice church member and her 17-year-old son. The young man was impaired from thalidomide. After the opening question, they were both willing and interested in reading the brochure *Seize Life* with me. They were both open to surrendering their lives to Jesus in prayer. The young man was baptized some time later. In some of his public testimonies, he joyfully professed that his life as an impaired person had attained a completely new dimension through Jesus.”

Experience 4: “Another time, I conversed with a 38-year-old man, who was married to an Adventist. He was a chain smoker (70 cigarettes a day) and couldn’t quit smoking. I explained to him how he could immediately and completely become free with God’s help through prayer and claiming God’s promises. And that is what happened. – Shortly afterwards, he revealed a further problem to me: He drank 10-14 bottles of beer a day. He now wanted to stop drinking as well. We prayed again and the Lord gave him complete deliverance from alcohol. – The next time I met him, I went through the brochure *Seize Life* with him. He was open to the questions and thoughts. After we prayed the prayer of surrender together, I asked him: ‘Assuming you would die tonight, would you be saved?’ He answered: ‘Of course.’ His wife was aghast. He then explained: ‘Jesus answered my first prayer and freed me from tobacco, in my second prayer He freed me from alcohol and since I have invited Him in my life, He has come into my life. So, I am saved.’ He was right. He then started to have morning worship with his dear wife. He was ready for Bible studies and was soon baptized. (You can find all the details for this deliverance in the *Letter to Andrew number 5: “Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol”*. This way can be used for other addictions as well.)”

Please take the enclosed Starter-Set and read the original *Letter to Andrew No. 13 “Seize Life”*. This valuable and worldwide-proven tool (with different titles) is used when leading someone to Jesus. In Chapter 9 “Practical Aids”, you will find basic information about the Starter-Set and the other *Letters to Andrew*.

After reading *Letter to Andrew No. 13*, please return to the book and continue reading in Chapter 7. This chapter about *Letter to Andrew No. 13* is

prepared as a practical guide to use with people you contact. In addition, it contains remarks in cursive and questions that you can use to lead a person to Jesus. These questions will help them make a decision.

Read *Letter to Andrew No. 13 “Seize Life”*

After reading this, please come back to this point in the book. Thank you!

What opening question can be used to tactfully and straightforwardly motivate reading *Letter to Andrew No. 13 “Seize Life”* with a friend, which leads to a personal relationship to God?

I ask:

“May I ask you a very important question?”

Everyone always answers yes. Even if we talked about completely different things, I was always able to get straight to the main point with this question.

Then I ask:

Key question number 1:

“Assuming you were to die today – heart attack, accident, etc.! Would you have the assurance of eternal life with Jesus Christ?” – The answer is usually “no”, sometimes “I hope” and rarely “yes!”. I never comment on these answers.

Only when someone answered “yes”, did I go on to ask the **key question number 1a**. I then said:

Key question number 1a:

“May I ask you another question?” I always received their permission, then I would ask:

“Assuming God would ask you: Why do you believe you may go to heaven?”

The answer shows if a person relies on justification by works or justification by faith. I also never comment on this answer. The *Letter to Andrew* shows that we are saved by God’s grace through faith.

Key Question number 2:

“Do you want to have this assurance?” This was always answered in the affirmative.

“Do you have a few minutes to read something on this topic together?”

If this was answered in the affirmative – which is the rule – **then I would hand over the *Letter to Andrew* number 13 to read together.** (Have multiple copies with you in case there are several people.)

While reading together, we can help people reflect by asking questions. But if possible, we shouldn’t ask any more questions than are shown here. We often say too much and distract with it.

In the following paragraphs, everything that is written in handwriting is what I would say in addition. I recommend you write it down in your copy of the leaflet. I do it like this. Please keep in mind that this is our crucial tool to lead people to Jesus. It is the only *Letter to Andrew* that we want to prepare so thoroughly.

Now we start reading with our friend

“Let us start to read:”

**Seize Life – Through a personal relationship with God
Letter to Andrew No. 13**

“We are just repeating our important question. I took it out of here. She impressed me very much.”

Dear Andrew⁸,

Can I straight away ask you an extremely important question?

Assuming that you were to die today (heart attack?, accident?), would you have the assurance of eternal life with Jesus Christ? Don’t remain in the dark! Five facts will help you find an answer.

Whoever searches for a relationship with God, will make the discovery of a lifetime:

⁸ The name was selected to remind us of the biblical Andrew, who led his brother Petrus to Jesus (John 1:40-42).



1. God loves me!

“In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (1 John 4:9-10 NKJV)

That is why God has a plan for me. *“For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior.”* (John 3:16-17 NKJV)

Jesus promises: *“... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”* (John 10:10 NKJV)

God offers me great things:

- ▶ A meaningful and full life – now
- ▶ Eternal life – later

Why isn't God's offer given much validity? What is the reason behind this painful reality?

2. We have separated ourselves from God!

From the beginning, humans were called to fellowship with God. They had a personal relationship with God. By their own free will, they separated themselves from God. They thought they could be independent this way. And so, the close relationship to God was lost.

The Bible calls this decision by human beings “sin”. It doesn't matter whether it manifests itself as active rebellion or passive indifference towards God.

Sin separates us from God.

The Bible explains what sin is:

“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2 NKJV)

“Whoever sins is guilty of breaking God's law, because sin is a breaking of the law.” (1 John 3:4 GNT)

“All wrongdoing is sin ...” (1 John 5:17 GNT)

Many realize that their life has no meaning. That is why they strive for a meaningful life. But how? Without God?

However, an honest and respectable life, ideas for bettering the world or religious achievements do not straddle the abyss between us and God. Sin, with all its consequences, is not eliminated with all these efforts.

What is God's answer to all these human efforts?

3. Jesus Christ died because of my sins!

His death paid the price for my sins:

“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5 NKJV)

“Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.” (Romans 8:34 NKJV)

Jesus Himself said: *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* (John 14:6 NKJV)

God did for me, what I can't do myself: He spanned the separating abyss between me and Him. This happened when the Son of God died on behalf of my sins.

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12 NKJV)

We can find a personal relationship with God through Jesus.

It's not enough to know this fact. God is waiting for a reaction. It could look something like this:

4. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior

“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.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV)

Accepting Him means:

- ▶ Living with Him in a personal relationship,
- ▶ Faith and trust in Him.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him ...” (Revelation 3:20 NKJV)

Two possibilities:



My ego as the center of my life.

My ego governs.

The results are, for example, desire for admiration, doubt, insecurity, guilt, internal unrest, etc.



Jesus Christ as the center of my life.

Jesus Christ leads me. The advantages are among other things: *peace, certainty, forgiveness, love, new and eternal life.*

My answer to the following questions is vital:

- ▶ Which illustration portrays my life?
- ▶ More the upper illustration or the lower illustration?

(We can help by perhaps saying:)

"Let's look at the illustrations again."

(Pause a moment afterwards and then ask:)

"At the moment does the left or right illustration apply more?"

(We don't comment about their answer, but rather say:)

"Let's continue reading:"

- ▶ What do I want my life to look like?
- ▶ Which illustration do you wish for in your future?

(We can now ask:)

"Which illustration do you wish for in your future?"

(We don't comment on the answer, but say perhaps:)

"Let's continue reading:"

- ▶ What could hinder me from accepting Christ in my life now?

(After a short pause, we can ask:)

"What could hinder you from accepting Christ now?"

(Usually the answer is: "Nothing ...")

(We don't comment on the answer, but continue reading:)

“Let’s go on to read on page 4:”

Please read including prayer.

(But please note that you should read the prayer slowly and very clearly.)

How can I accept Jesus Christ in my life?

I can make a decision today, now, for Jesus Christ. It is so simple to speak with Jesus. The Bible calls this “**prayer**”. My prayer could be something like this:

Suggested Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, I want to thank You that You died and rose again for me. I am a sinner, please forgive me. Please come into my life now. I can’t save myself. I can’t earn eternal life. That is why I trust You. Free me from the power of evil. Give me strength to follow You. I surrender myself to You with everything I have and am. I accept eternal life. I haven’t earned it; but I thank You for this gift. AMEN.”

Can you say ‘yes’ to this prayer?

May I recommend carefully to read this prayer through a second time. The question is: Is it consistent with your will? Remember: your will is God’s landing place in your life.

“I am going to read this aloud again, so that you can decide if you can say yes to this prayer.”

Now, please read the prayer a second time aloud slowly and clearly.

Second reading

After this second reading ask: *“Can you say yes to this prayer?”*

After a short pause, during which we received approval, either in the word or on the face, we go on.

I suggest that we/you pray the prayer aloud now.

“Before that, let’s read the next sentence:”

When yes, then I want to personally surrender myself to Jesus Christ with the words of this suggested prayer. He will hear my prayer.

"If it's ok with you, let's kneel down." It is best to kneel on such a prayer. (But it doesn't have to be.)

Prayer

After you prayed together, you can say:

"My congratulations! Our dear Lord has heard your prayer. We will just continue reading to the end to see what this means in detail."

5. My new life with Jesus Christ

I have now received Jesus Christ in my life. I want to continue on this path with Him. I take God's promises in His word seriously.

My new life isn't based on a feeling, rather on the facts in God's word:

"Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17 GNT)

Some may expect an exhilarating feeling after this prayer. An engineer said disappointedly:

"I have given Jesus Christ my word with this prayer of surrender. But I am missing the corresponding feelings."

You have surrendered your life to Jesus Christ. Your prayer of surrender created a **new fact**, because God and His word are reliable. The following realization is important in this context: **Facts aren't dependent on our feelings.** Facts are completely valid without any feelings. They are independent from my feelings.

For example: Your birthday is on a certain day. But you have absolutely no birthday feelings! **The fact is:** your birthday is on this day – even when you don't have any birthday feelings.

You know the times table. For example: $2 \times 2 = 4$; or $4 \times 4 = 16$. **The times table is a fact** – you don't have to feel that. Feelings are inappropriate here. Feelings are not a gauge of facts!

The engineer was relieved when he realized: "I have said yes to Jesus Christ. I am now a Christian – even without the corresponding feelings. Unfortunately, my mother never explained this simple principle to me."

What is new or has changed in my life?

1. Christ has entered my life. (Revelation 3:20; Colossians 1:27)
2. Christ forgives my guilt. (Colossians 1:14; 1 John 1:9)
3. I belong to God – I am His child. (1 John 3:1)
4. My life now has deep meaning. (John 10:10; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15,17)
5. Christ helps me to follow His instructions. (John 14:15; 15:10-11)
6. I am preparing to make a covenant with Christ through baptism.
(Mark 16:16)
7. Christ gives me eternal life. (1 John 5:12)

Jesus promises: *“I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.”* (John 10:10b GNT)

Life is growth, Stagnation is regression.

That is why:

- ▶ I don't look at myself, but rather at Jesus Christ.
- ▶ I rely on God's redemption, not on my fluctuating feelings.
- ▶ I keep a close connection with my Lord.
- ▶ I maintain a prayer life.
- ▶ I read daily in the Bible – God's word.
- ▶ I have regular fellowship with like-minded Christians.
- ▶ I profess Jesus Christ in my surroundings.
- ▶ I prepare for baptism.
- ▶ I am looking forward to the second coming of my Lord.

You have started a new life with Jesus Christ. I am happy for you. I want to compare your decision with an engagement. An engagement takes place in private. A beautiful time follows the engagement. You get to know each other better, you learn to love and trust each other more and the new relationship becomes deeper. When the time comes that you want to belong to each other forever, then the wedding follows. A wedding with Christ is equivalent to biblical baptism.

“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16 GNT)

Maybe you could read my letter through several times, because I have attempted to summarize the essence of our relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

How can I get to know Jesus Christ better?

The same way we get to know any person, who isn't present. By conversations (telephone calls). In this case, we call it "prayer". By reading about them. It is highly recommended to read the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) in the New Testament of the Bible. They tell about the life of Jesus. It gives a good overview. In addition, a topical Bible study is recommended – for indepth insights. There are free Bible correspondence courses in any country.

Naturally, it is now a matter of enjoying and maintaining our new relationship of trust with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has given us a vital help for this purpose: life in God's strength. I am looking forward to sharing more about this in my next letter. (Life in God's strength – how?)

Jesus longs for an enduring and sincere relationship with you. He said: *"Abide in Me, and I in you."* (John 15:4 NKJV)

Now, I have invited Jesus Christ into my life with this prayer. I trust that He will keep His promises in my life: *"I will never turn away anyone who comes to me."* (John 6:37 GNT)

"But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing." (1 John 1:9 GNT)

God's word gives me assurance: *"Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."* (1 John 5:12 GNT)

Helmut and my friend Kurt
(Helmut Haubeil and Kurt Hasel)

End of working copy of Seize Life

The First Step in the Right Direction

Your heart will be filled with great joy, when a dear person says the prayer of surrender in the *Letter to Andrew* number 13. But remember that this is only the first step, but very important step, in the right direction. They aren't ready to be baptized yet (normally), but rather they are probably ready for discipleship studies or Bible studies.

The end of the letter makes it very easy to recommend a further Bible study together. And it will certainly be accepted under these positive circumstances.

No to prayer

If the person doesn't say yes to the prayer, then you can say:

"You have the brochure and can pray this prayer later if you want. But we can finish reading it together now."

If they have no objections, then you can finish reading the brochure together. Then, we can come back to it later and suggest that they re-read the brochure so that they develop a personal relationship with Christ. If you don't want to use the brochure in your second attempt, then use the pamphlet *The Way to Eternal Life* (see also attachment C at the end of the book or www.steps-to-personal-revival.info – *Letters to Andrew*). It deals with the same topic, but with a different train of thought. It is included as Z1 in the Starter-Set. Our friend doesn't even notice that we are repeating our efforts to lead him to Jesus. It is important that we gain clarity for this step in prayer and move forward in prayer.

Encouragement

This booklet was and is an excellent tool for me. I guess I've gone through this booklet with 400 to 500 people over the years. A large part of this happened in a one-on-one conversation and at the first meeting. Many of them became followers of Jesus. Sometimes people asked me during our initial contact to visit their relatives or friends to bring them this message. It is a tremendous help for the first part of a contact. It leads to having Discipleship Studies or Bible studies or lectures together. There is plenty of good material available now for further visits.

In chapter 9 I show how one can move forward in the introduction to Jesus after a few additional preparatory steps.

Practical Tips

It can be a great help if you write down the questions from above (in cursive) in your own copy of the leaflet.

If you like, you can practice the whole procedure with a friend or family member so that you can gain confidence. And if you don't feel comfortable helping your acquaintance with questions, then read it together without any questions or postpone it until another time. Or pray earnestly about it and give it to the person to read alone.

If someone wants to rid themselves of tobacco and/or alcohol or any kind of addiction, use *Letter to Andrew number 5: "Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol. How can you become completely free from addictions with God's help?"* On the page 127 under Experience 4 is a short example. – It is very important to lead the freed person to Jesus either with "**Seize Life**" or/and "**The Way to Eternal Life**" so that they can resist temptation. It's about avoiding a relapse.

The Way to Life in God's Strength, living in the Holy Spirit

We use the *Letter to Andrew No. 14*.

The next step, which is the most important after accepting Jesus in our life, should be, if possible, the Bible study using *Letter to Andrew number 14: "Living in God's Strength – How?"* (it is in this book chapter 8)

In this way, the dear person can be led to an abiding life in Christ. Here, you don't need to ask as many questions, because appropriate questions are included in the topic.

It is certainly advisable to repeat *Letter to Andrew No. 13* (or "*The Way to Eternal Life*" – more about this shortly) and *Letter to Andrew No. 14* for further insights. Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you in your next course of action.

If the two steps have been taken (prayer according to chapter 7 and positive developments in life through the power of God according to chapter 8), then it is a great help if you suggest afterwards that they read the book *Steps to Personal Revival* and then *Abide in Jesus* or you could study it together. (See the book offers at the end of the book.)

EXPERIENCES

Test prior to publication

“I asked two theologians for examination. The first answer was (in excerpt): Your work on *Steps to Personal Revival* is really a gift from heaven, first to you and through you then to all readers. Therefore, I first thanked my Lord, and now I thank you very much. Although there have recently been some very practical and deeply spiritual books in the church, *Steps to Personal Revival* is extraordinary. In such a compact and yet quite detailed way, the path to fulfillment is represented with the Holy Spirit. Anyone who reads it cannot avoid his spiritual inventory and make a decision.”

Email May 1, 2012 – Both brothers recommended printing

From the Ludwigsburg Church – “My husband and I were studying *40 Days No 1* and experienced great personal blessings praying together. Afterwards, we organised prayer meetings twice weekly at church in Ludwigsburg and read the book with our church members. We distinctly experienced God’s guidance and blessings and many miracles! God refreshed us and spiritually awakened our congregation: members who were never before able to speak to people, all of a sudden approached strangers. When we joined in prayer, God welded us together as a congregation. Praying for 5 people during the 40 days brought exceptional results – God worked in a mighty way on those people. Every so often people walk in to our church service on Sabbath off the street. One of those families now receives Bible studies. They learned about Sabbath through videos on the internet and through the book *Great Controversy* and were looking for a church for some time.”
K.a.C.S. (abbreviated) Web T1

Lively Intercessory Prayer – “At first, I just read through the book (*40 Days No 1*). Now that I go through the devotions with my prayer partner, I realize that they are even more valuable than I first thought! I got answers to questions that I could not solve by myself. I thank God also for my prayer partner who participates openly and with lots of energy. I was impressed with the book from the first pages. We should not only pray for someone, but also lovingly care about that person. This makes the Intercessory Prayer come alive. I regret that I never saw intercessory prayer in this light before. Living, lively faith! I am convinced that the intercession is just as important for the one who prays, as it is for the one being prayed for.” Web T6

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What would my answer be to the opening question if someone asked me?*

2. *Why is it good to imagine yourself in the following steps of the gospel? (1. God loves me! 2. We have separated ourselves from God! 3. Jesus Christ died because of my sins!)*

3. *Why do the questions (in point 4- I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior) help me to discern my personal spiritual position? What does that then trigger?*

4. *How can a person accept Jesus Christ in their life?*

5. *What becomes new in thinking, feeling, speaking and deciding, when you surrender to Jesus?*

6. *Accepting Jesus through a prayer of surrender is the first step in the right direction. (Compare with an engagement). How can this dear person get to know Jesus better? How can we help them here?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... for assurance that you are a child of God and thereby saved.
 2. ... for discernment to see where there are obstacles in my life, which are keeping me from completely surrendering to Jesus.
 3. ... for joy to live your life together with Christ.
 4. ... that you can accompany people on their way to Jesus.

HOW CAN WE LEAD PEOPLE TO LIVE IN THE POWER OF GOD?

*Through reading a Bible lesson together using
Letter to Andrew No. 14 –
Life in the power of God – how?*

Here I would like to recommend that you go to the Starter-Set and read the original letter No. 14: “Life in the power of God – how?” – Please come back to this point afterwards and continue here. This will be valuable to you for your personal relationship with the Holy Spirit and will familiarize you with this valuable tool. Thank you very much for your understanding.

No special explanations are necessary here, unless our companion has a question. However, we can ask questions when we think it is necessary. If someone wants to go in more depth with this important concern, then we should refer them to *Steps to Personal Revival* (p. 205) or study it with them.

Dear Andrew!⁹

I had to hold the funeral for a young doctor. I requested her Bible so that I could find some reference points in order to make the address more personal. I found a place, where she had written: “I want life in abundance!” She wanted exactly that which only Jesus can give us:

9 The name was selected to remind us of the biblical Andrew, who led his brother Peter to Jesus (John 1:40-42).

*“... I have come that they may have **life**, and that they may have it **more abundantly**.” (John 10:10 NKJV)*

Jesus wants us to experience this new life now and to continue this new life when He comes again as eternal life in God’s kingdom.

The challenge now is how we can have the motivation and strength for a happy and enduring relationship in a life with Jesus.

A fitting comparison: A car without fuel. There are only two possibilities: to push the car or to get fuel. Only when the car has fuel, does it fulfill its purpose.

A Christian life without the power of God can be compared to a car without fuel.

Hence: How can I live in the power of God? Jesus told His disciples:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you ...”
(Acts 1:8 NKJV)

How does that work? Where can we find more detailed information? There is a unique passage in the Bible, where our dear Lord Jesus lovingly and strongly encourages us to ask for the Holy Spirit. Here is the text – Luke 11:9-13:

*“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 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!”*

Do you notice something? Jesus used the verb “ask” six times in this passage; then He substitutes the word “ask” two times and reinforces it with the word “seek” – an active verb – and then two more times with the verb “knock” – also an active verb. Doesn’t this distinctly show us that we should take action? The last “ask” is in the continuous tense in Greek. This means that we shouldn’t just ask one time, but rather continuously ask. Not only does Jesus emphasize the urgency of asking, but also expects us to continuously practice it. This shows us that Jesus is convicted that we are missing something crucial. He is clearly calling our attention to the fact that we need the Holy Spirit and we are dependent on Him.

Jesus shows us in a masterly manner – by frequently repeating the verbs and making comparisons – our greatest need: we should continuously ask for the Holy Spirit. This is exceptional. It has to do with God’s supreme gift – the gift which brings all the other gifts in its train. This is the crowning gift that Jesus gave His disciples and plain proof of His love.

Every day will be an adventure for us, when we are acquainted with the reality of a life filled with the Holy Spirit and we constantly commit ourselves to His leadership.

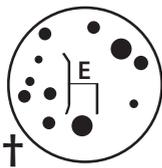
The Bible speaks about three different groups of people in relation to their relationship to God:

Ask yourself: Which group do I belong to? And – what group do I want to belong to?

A. The natural person

This is a person, who hasn’t accepted Christ yet.

“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14 NKJV)



A life ruled by the ego

E = Ego, limited self on the throne

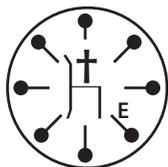
† = Christ outside of their life

• = Areas of life, which are controlled by the ego and often lead to discord and disappointment

B. The spiritual Person

This is a person, who has accepted Christ and is led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

“But he who is spiritual judges all things ...” (1 Corinthians 2:15 NKJV)



A life led by Christ

† = Christ is on the throne of life

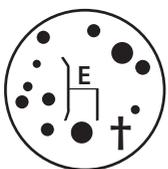
E = The ego is dethroned

- = Areas of life, which are under the leadership of the unlimited God and growing in harmony with God's plan

C. The carnal Person

This is a person, who has accepted Christ, but often experiences defeats, because he tries to live a Christian life in his own strength instead of in the power of the Holy Spirit.

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NKJV)



A life controlled by the ego

E = Ego, limited self on the throne

† = Christ in their life, but not on the throne

- = Areas of life, which are controlled by the ego and often lead to discord and disappointment.

We want to look at this important matter in four steps. We will look more closely at the situation of the spiritual and carnal people.

1. God wants us to have a fulfilled and fruitful life.

Jesus said: *“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10 NKJV)*

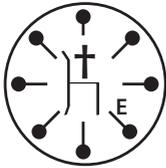
“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5 NKJV)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV)

“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 NKJV)

The spiritual Person

Some traits that are characteristic of a life with God:



- ▶ Christ is the focal point
- ▶ Authority through the Holy Spirit
- ▶ An effective prayer life
- ▶ Understanding of God’s word
- ▶ Trust in God
- ▶ Obedience to God
- ▶ Lead other people to Christ

*Love | Joy | Peace | Longsuffering | Kindness | Goodness | Faithfulness
Gentleness | Self-Control*

The effects of these traits in our life depend on our maturity in Christ, on the degree of our connection with Him and also if we completely trust Him with all areas of our life.

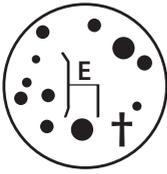
Someone, who is just starting to understand the work of the Holy Spirit, shouldn’t become discouraged when they don’t bear as much fruit as a mature Christian, who has long been acquainted with this truth.

Why do most Christians not experience this fulfilled life?

2. Who cannot experience the fulfilled and fruitful Christian life?

The carnal man

Some or all of the following traits characterize carnal Christians, who do not completely trust God.



- ▶ Ignorance about His spiritual possessions
- ▶ Unbelief
- ▶ Disobedience
- ▶ Insufficient love for God and others
- ▶ Insufficient prayer life
- ▶ Insufficient interest in the Bible

Impure thoughts | Jealousy | Guilt | Unnecessary worries | Discouragement | Critical attitude | Despair | Aimlessness | Legality (the idea that they have to earn something from God)

(Someone, who thinks they are a real Christian, but consistently sins, should examine themselves according to 1 John 2:3, 3:6, 3:9 and Ephesians 5:5 to see if they really are a Christian.)

The third point shows us the sole solution to this problem ...

3. Jesus has promised us a fulfilled and fruitful life. It is the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit, as well as the guidance and authority that the Holy Spirit gives us.

A life filled with the Spirit is a life in which Christ has the leadership. Christ lives His life in us and works in us and through us by the continuous power of the Holy Spirit. (John 15)

A. According to John 3:1-8, a person becomes a Christian through the working of the Holy Spirit. At the moment of our spiritual birth, we receive a new life through Christ.

It tells us in John 14:17 that the Holy Spirit stays by and in us.

We should bear in mind:

We received our natural life at birth. It was given to us with the intent that it is preserved for our lifetime. From the outside, it is preserved by air, water, food, etc. It is exactly the same in the spiritual world as in the natural world. We receive our spiritual life – the Bible calls it “*being born again*” (John 3:3), when we completely surrender to Christ and attest to this through the biblical baptism in due time (Acts 2:38; John 1:12;



John 14:16-17). So that this spiritual life can be preserved, it needs a life with the Holy Spirit, prayer, God's word, etc.

- B. The Holy Spirit is the source of a fulfilled life (John 7:37-39).
- C. The Holy Spirit came to exalt Christ. (John 16:1-15) When someone is filled with the Holy Spirit, then they are a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.
- D. Christ promised us the power of the Holy Spirit in His last words before He ascended into heaven, so that we will be empowered to be His disciples and witnesses (Acts 1:1-9).

How can a person be filled with the Holy Spirit?

4. We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith.

Then we can experience the overflowing and fruitful life, which Christ promised us.

We cannot earn God's abundance – it is a gift. We receive it through faith – by trusting God.

You can experience being filled with the Holy Spirit now, when you:

- A. Have a genuine desire to be filled and led by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:6; John 7:37-39).
- B. Pray by faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit, in other words, trusting that Jesus Christ will answer your prayer.

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 Spirit ...” (John 7:38-39 NKJV)

“... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:14 NKJV)

God has made it easy for us to trust Him by giving us concrete promises. He says in 1 John 5:14 NKJV: *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”*

Those, who pray according to God's will – the next verse says:
"And if we know [at the moment] that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." (1 John 5:15 NKJV)

Another translation (NIV) says:
"And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him." This means that prayers according to God's will are answered immediately, when we bring them before God, even though we often don't feel anything. Feelings can appear later.

Example:

Someone prays to be freed from tobacco. His prayer is answered by faith at the moment he utters his request. A few hours later, he notices that he no longer craves tobacco. (Further details in the *Letter to Andrew* No. 5 on *"Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol"*. Look at www.steps-to-personal-revival.info – *Letters to Andrew*) Praying with promises is also explained in detail in *Steps to Personal Revival*, Chapter 5 – look at the same web-site).

Jesus says in Mark 11:24 NKJV: *"Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you [actually] receive them, and you will have them."*

- C. God has given us a promise in Luke 11:9-13 for receiving the Holy Spirit. We already took a look at it at the beginning of this letter, hence only verse 13 (NKJV): *"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!"*

How to pray by faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

A prayer using promises strengthens our trust in it being granted and at the same time, it is an opportunity to express our faith. Following is a suggested prayer:

“Father in heaven, I come in the name of Jesus to you. I cannot follow you in my own power. You know my failed attempts. I sincerely ask You to give me the strength to live according to Your will. You commanded me: “Be filled with the Spirit!” (Ephesians 5:18 NKJV) I am willing to be filled. I ask you to please make this reality now, because You have promised that You want to give us the Holy Spirit more than earthly fathers want to give their children good things (Luke 11:13). I want to thank You that you have already filled me, because You have promised that when I pray according to Your will, then I can know that I already have what I asked for (1 John 5:14-15). Please lead me and use me today according to Your will. AMEN.”

Does this prayer correspond with your desires? If yes, then make this your prayer now. I recommend that you pray this prayer aloud and trust that God has filled you now with His Holy Spirit.

Assurance that you are filled with the Holy Spirit

Have you asked God to fill you with His Holy Spirit? On the basis of what authority can you know if you have been filled with the Holy Spirit? (Because God and His word are trustworthy: Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:22-23.)

Feelings are not crucial. God’s promises in His word are vital – not our feelings. A Christian lives by faith, meaning by trusting the reliability of God and His word.

The following illustration should show the relationship between facts (God and His word), faith (our trust in God and His word) and feelings (result of faith and obedience) (John 14:21).



The train can travel with or without wagons. It would be futile for the wagons to pull the locomotive. Likewise, Christians are not dependent on their moods and emotions, rather they put their trust (our faith) in the reliability of God and the promises in His word.

How to live in the Holy Spirit

A Christian can only have a life filled with the Holy Spirit by faith (trust in God and His promises). In so doing, we should pay attention to what 2 Corinthians 4:16 says:

“... yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.” (NKJV)

That is why it is advisable that we dedicate our lives to God every morning and by faith ask Him – preferably with a promise – to be renewed with the Holy Spirit. When you live day by day with trust in Christ, then the following will happen:

- A. Your life will yield more and more fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22); your character will become increasingly similar to Christ’s (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18).
- B. Your prayer life and reading God’s word will become more meaningful.
- C. You will experience His strength to resist temptations and sin.

God’s word says:

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able ...” (1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV)

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13 NKJV)

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” (Ephesians 6:10 NKJV)

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV)

“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 [the Holy Spirit] of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1-2 NKJV)

“We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.” (1 John 5:18 NKJV)

- D. You will experience God’s support when you witness (Acts 1:8).

E. What should I do about sin?

You can by faith continually experience God's love and forgiveness. When it becomes clear to you that God doesn't approve of something (an attitude or deed) in your life, although you live with Him and earnestly want to follow Him, then confess your sin, for example, a wrong, irreconcilability, etc. Then thank Him that He has forgiven your sins because Christ died on the cross. Accept His love and forgiveness by faith and continue to live in fellowship with Him.

When you sin – an act of disobedience – there is a disruption in your relationship with God, then you need to do the following:

1. CONFESSION

Confess your sin by name, agree with God in regards to His judgement of your sin and thank Him for His forgiveness (1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25). Confession includes repentance – a change of attitude or deed.

2. ASKING

Ask again by faith for the Holy Spirit. Trust that He will continue to lead you as He promised in Luke 11:13 and in 1 John 5:14-15.

When these explanations have been of help, then please pass on a copy or read it to someone. May you have great joy in your new life in God's power.

Best wishes and blessings,

Helmut and my friend Kurt
(Helmut Haubeil and Kurt Hasel).

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *Why can a Christian's life without God's power be compared to a car without fuel?*

2. *What loving invitation did Jesus give us, so that we will be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit? What should we do? (The last "ask" in Luke 11:13 is in the continuous tense in Greek: that means continuously asking, asking daily)*

3. *What three different groups of people are there in terms of their relationship to God? To which group do you belong?*

4. *How can a person be filled with the Holy Spirit?*

5. *God's word says: "... the inward man is being renewed day by day."* (2 Corinthians 4:16 NKJV) *What happens when we daily ask for the Holy Spirit?*

6. *How can you lead people to a life filled with God's strength?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... that you will live in God's strength and for wisdom to encourage others to do the same.
 2. ... that the characteristics of a spiritual person will grow in you.
 3. ... that you will understand what it means to live in the Holy Spirit and that you will be able to convey this the right way to others.

PRACTICAL AIDS TO HELP LEAD DEAR PEOPLE TO JESUS

*The Letters to Andrew (LA) to lead people to Jesus
Video Series for teaching faith
How can I find the true church by myself?*

“Every soul whom Christ has rescued is called to work in His name for the saving of the lost. ... Each has his part to act ... Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church, so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability.” (*Christian Service*, p. 10.6, 11.6, 11.7) The God of love has planned in His wisdom to make the lost into candidates for heaven and thereby foster the growth and joy of His Spirit-filled coworkers. Don't we want to show these dear people the way to heaven?

LETTERS TO ANDREW (LA) TO LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS

These have arisen about 30 years of my service to meet current needs – taken from practice for use in practice. Therefore, I can heartily recommend them for our mission contacts. LA 13 “*Seize Life*” and LA 14 “*Life in the power of God – How?*” were in worldwide use under other names before we incorporated them. I gained a lot of experience with them. I don't want to do without them anymore.

A reader's letter:

"Now, I also share the *Letters to Andrew* in audio book form. They are well received. That is why I have once again ordered 30 copies. The *Letters to Andrew* help me personally to understand the Bible better. Since I have only been studying God's word for a year, I am all the more thankful for every insight from God's word.

Recently, I received a call from a friend, who had just received the *Letters to Andrew* audio book CD. He told me that He was so touched by God's word that He now wanted to change his way of life. He also wants to visit the church on Sabbath. My husband has also listened to this CD and said: I am thrilled with these letters – from the first to the last." (R. A. # 159)

These topics are very suitable for establishing contacts, for example, when we want to build a relationship with five people in order to help them on their journey to God's kingdom. The *Letters to Andrew* can be used in multiple ways. We can use them as Bible studies to read, we can give them as a present to people to read themselves. In German we can share them as MP3 or CD audio to listen to together or to listen to while driving or doing routine work.

Why did I call them *Letters to Andrew*? Why are they in letter form with the salutation "Dear Andrew*"? *This star is explained at the bottom of the first page of every letter: "Andrew after the biblical Andrew in John 1:40-42." The reason – Andrew led his brother Peter to Jesus.

These short writings should help lead people to Jesus. Advertising experts emphasize that letters are well received. They allow addressing people informally and the recipient feels personally spoken to.

German: 17 topics are available in three different forms: as individual letters, as a book *Experience God through the Letters to Andrew*, as well as MP3 and CD audiobooks. They are also available for free for computers, tablets and smartphones at **www.schritte-zur-persönlichen-erweckung.info** – *Andreasbriefe*. I hope that similar initiatives will be started in other languages.

English: What is available? The letters, which are mentioned in this book, are already translated in English. Please go to **www.steps-to-personal-revival-info** – *Letters to Andrew*.

The individual letters or the whole Starter-Set can also be downloaded for free or sent to others.

Appendix D contains brief descriptions of the contents of all 17 letters. This gives you a quick overview.

How should we start with our personal contacts?

LA 4 – Pascal’s Bet: Does God exist or not? What are the chances?

It is good to use this letter for the initial contact. The topic shows from an unusual angle that the Christian faith is desirable for everyone. Of all the letters, this *Letter to Andrew* is viewed in the internet the most often. We give a short description of the content here for your information: Generally, this bet is known as “Pascal’s bet”. Blaise Pascal came to the conclusion that every sensible person had to decide for Jesus Christ even if the chances of the accuracy of the Christian teachings lay at only 50:50. Dr. Viggo Olson, a well-known surgeon and a determined opponent of faith, encountered Blaise Pascal’s statements. He and his wife fought tooth and nail against the Christian faith. But after intensive studies he became a staunch Christian. Every person has to make a decision. A person has to build their life either on the assumption that the Christian teachings are true or on the assumption that they are false. Whoever doesn’t enter this bet, automatically places a bet on the possibility that the Christian teachings are false.

I would recommend **LA 1** next:

LA 1 – The Christian Faith put to the test

Everything hinges on honestly answering three questions. I have taken this path hundreds of times and have repeatedly experienced positive reactions and amazement.

1. Does a living, all-knowing and all-powerful God exist, who loves humans?
2. Is Jesus of Nazareth really the redeemer sent by God?
3. Was the Bible or the Holy Scriptures really written by people under God’s authority or is it merely a human product?

There are very satisfactory answers to these fundamental questions. See for yourself. Perhaps you weren’t familiar with this introduction until now.

Since number 1 only covers one prophecy, I always added LA 8 or went through it next. Three additional prophecies are covered in LA 8. In this way, we can lead people to strong trust at the beginning or encourage their existing trust in God, Jesus and the Bible.

LA 8 – Prophecies about Jesus Christ

Probability of Fulfillment 1:10¹⁷

This *Letter to Andrew* especially strengthens trust in Jesus of Nazareth being the divine Redeemer and the Bible being inspired by God. Different prophecies and fulfillments about Jesus' life are compared. Eight details show why the fulfillment of these prophecies is impossible from a human standpoint.

Now is a good opportunity to introduce Jesus.

LA 2 – Unique and beyond comparison: Jesus of Nazareth

The greatest character in the history of the world – unique and beyond comparison. What impact did Jesus' life have? Why is Jesus so unique? Why did His life leave such a lasting impression, like no other biography? Who did Jesus say that He was? What did eyewitnesses say, what does history say? What did genuine doubters discover when they examined the facts?

Now surely our friend is open to learn about the Bible and the plan of salvation.

LA 3 – What is the Bible's main objective?

God's plan of redemption is portrayed in a short and spirited manner in this *Letter to Andrew*. What must one do to receive fullness of life and eternal life? Large surveys showed that 98 % of people questioned, had a false perception of what the main focus of the Bible was. This letter clearly shows that redemption is a gift of God and cannot and doesn't need to be earned. It is awesome when this truth becomes clear to someone!

The most important topic in this series for the beginning phase is:

LA 13 – Seize Life through a Personal Relationship with God

Assuming – You would die today (heart attack or accident). Do you have the assurance now of eternal life with Jesus Christ? Don't remain in the dark! Five facts will help you find an answer. Whoever searches for a relationship with God, will make the discovery of a lifetime!

Please recall that Chapter 7 is a practical guide for using LA 13 “*Seize Life*”.

Since a lot depends on this, it is important that we especially take time for this. Two things are very important: That we have read the letter through multiple times and that we have prayed earnestly for and continue to pray for all those acquaintances, whom we want to show the way to Jesus.

The letter can be given to a person to read, but it is **decidedly** more profound and helpful and definitely more expedient to read it together, so that we can personally accompany them on their journey to Christ. I recommend using this letter in the beginning phase of contact and to pray about when to hand over the booklet or when to read the Bible study together, because it is so helpful when a person finds Jesus. We do not have the task of pressuring them to surrender, rather to help them in the process.

If at the first attempt our friend is not ready for the prayer of surrender, then we should after a short time and personal prayer, offer it again with Z1 The Way to Eternal Life, which leads to the same goal with slightly other words and thoughts.

Abide in Jesus, Chapter 2: Surrender to Jesus, is recommended for the helper and possibly also for the friend for more in-depth information on the subject..

It is infinitely valuable to learn how we can live in the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore:

LA 14 – Life in God's Strength – How?

“... *I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*” (John 10:10 NKJV) Jesus wants us to experience this new life now and to continue it after His second coming as eternal life in God's kingdom. This *Letter to Andrew* is about how we can have motivation and strength for a happy and consistent relationship to a life with Jesus.

LA 5 – Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol

We use this great experience only when there is a bondage through addictions and also when we want to teach praying with promises.

A 39-year-old truck driver wanted to kick the smoking habit. He smoked 60-70 cigarettes every day, and nothing he had tried had worked. So I asked him: “Would you like to know how, with the help of God, you can get free from smoking, immediately, and with no withdrawal symptoms?” Yes, indeed. He wanted to know. I explained to him that I could not help him, I could only show him the way to God; the One who is more than willing and able to help. Adolf accepted God’s offer and was immediately and completely delivered. 14 days later, he prayed that God would also free him from drinking beer – 10-14 bottles per day. God liberated him from that addiction as well, and Adolf’s doctor was amazed at the sudden improvement in his health. One year later, with the money he had saved, Adolf even took a vacation in the USA with his wife and daughters.

STARTER-SET – LETTERS TO ANDREW TO LEAD PEOPLE TO JESUS

We have added a *Starter-Set Letters to Andrew* to this book. Why the term *Starter-Set*? From the 17 *Letters to Andrew* those that can be used to start a relationship have been selected. These letters are a bridge from theory to practice. Please remember the 12 advantages of a booklet, which are mentioned at the beginning of chapter 7. The envelope contains one copy of all required letters. There are eight letters Nr. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14 and Z 1. 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. The envelope is intended for notes: when did I give which number and other remarks. The order address for further Starter-Sets is mentioned on page 202. – The letters can also be downloaded for free at www.steps-to-personal-revival.info: *Letters to Andrew*, or be sent to someone. All 17 *Letters to Andrew* are in English and will be available at the end of 2020. “*But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (1 Corinthians 15:57)

Discipleship-Studies

If Jesus is accepted (LA13) it is important to deepen this relationship. For this purpose, you can use the exceptional book *Steps to Christ* (It is available with several different titles) from E.G. White. It has two main sections: How do I come to Christ? How do I abide in Christ? It is available in any language (it has been translated in 150 languages).

If the life in the Holy Spirit has begun, then it is also important to deepen this relationship. This is best done by studying the Steps to Personal Revival brochure. (see Book Offers p. 203)

After these discipleship studies, you can choose appropriate items from the following letters to Andrew. It is also good to move on to a normal Bible study series or to watch an evangelistic series on video in which the essential Bible truths are covered. (more in Appendix F)

What is the content of the remaining nine Letters to Andrew?

The remaining *Letters to Andrew* can now also be used at your discretion. Please look at Appendix D on p. 193 at the end of the book. This contains brief descriptions of the content of each letter, so you can orientate yourself quickly.

LA 6 – How do you know what the future holds? (Daniel 2)

LA 7 – Prevention or healing? (Introduction to the health message)

LA 9 – Prophecies about four cities (Strengthen faith in the Bible)

LA 10 – Jesus and the Sabbath (This is my first Bible study on the Sabbath. It isn't confrontational, it reduces prejudices and builds the beginning of trust in the Sabbath.)

LA 11 – What did Jesus say about Jerusalem, His second coming and the end of the world? (What can we learn from the “mini-judgement” which took place in 70 A.D.?)

LA 12 – Signs of the return of Jesus (Are we facing the big turning point or – ... the end?)

LA 15 – Benefit from reading the Bible – How? (Let us look at a path that many have enjoyed while reading the Bible.)

LA 16 – How can I experience God's love and forgiveness? (God doesn't want me to bear any burden from the past, not to worry about the future and to live in friendship with Him today and be armed with His power.)

LA 17 – Do you have something against someone? (How can I forgive and forget? Forgiveness frees both parties)

May I recommend that you familiarize yourself well with the *Letters to Andrew* in question so that you can pass them on with joy and conviction.

Bible Class

If your church has a **Bible class for interested individuals or newly baptized people**, then the Bible studies can take place there or can be in addition to a weekly Bible study. It focuses on questions about a personal relationship with God and discipleship, as well as the basic truths. This class, which is called the pastor's Bible class in many countries, is a great help. I held such a class in all of my churches. We should then talk about baptism after this class and help our friend surrender themselves to Jesus through baptism and join His church as a living member. (More in chapter 10)

VIDEOS FOR TEACHING FAITH

Today we have really good tools to instruct and to develop faith in God and His Word, if no teacher is available. To teach the gospel, please look for evangelistic series that contain all important Bible truths. The series with 20-30 presentations are best. In Appendix F you will find short descriptions of 15 websites and what you can find there. These pages are valuable for children, youth, truth seekers and longtime believers. Also mentioned is the website from the GC Total Member Involvement. This contains tips for Evangelism, Literature Distribution and diverse series on Health and Wellness, Diabetes, Depression Recovery and a Cooking School. In appendix F you find a treasure chest of valuable websites.

At www.steps-to-personal-revival.info you can find:

- 7 Video sermons *Steps to Personal Revival* by Helmut Haubeil
- Audiobook *Steps to Personal Revival*, Speaker: Mike Fenton
- 3 Video sermons *How to be baptized with the Holy Spirit* by Dwight Nelson

Making Friends for God: The Joy of Sharing in His Mission.

(Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide – Standard Edition 3rd Quarter 2020)

The principal author, Mark Finley, says in the introduction:

“One of my friends expressed this thought, ‘Mission is primarily the work of God. He is employing all of the resources of heaven to save our planet. Our work is to cooperate joyfully with Him in His work of saving lost people.’ It seemed as if a heavy burden was lifted off my shoulders.” That is what this book is about. I would suggest: Keep this Sabbath School Bible Study Guide for the 3rd quarter so that you can look up certain details as needed. Keep it together with this book.

HOW CAN I FIND THE TRUE CHURCH BY MYSELF?

Finding the true church is a fascinating Bible study for candidates for the kingdom and also for church members.

Is there actually still a true church today? Since Jesus spoke of it as His church, I would prefer calling it the church of Jesus Christ. *“The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it [My church].”* (Matthew 16:18 NKJV) Jesus’s words show us that His church still exists. Therefore, we can search for it and find it.

An experience to illustrate: Three sisters, who each belonged to a different church, asked a pastor: “Which church is the right one?” He asked them three questions, which they answered in the affirmative. After that he told them how they could resolve the problem for themselves with a relatively short Bible study. They completed this Bible study and then they all joined the same church.

Why should a person discover this themselves? Can’t you just ask an expert? Or ask individual churches and groups? Naturally. But almost all of them claim to be the true church, although they generally have very different teachings. So, in this way we won’t accomplish anything. It would be best to follow the example of the inhabitants of Berea (Greece). The Bible refers to their attitude as noble:

“Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” (Acts 17:11 NIV)

This is good advice! Back then the people in Berea eagerly listened to Paul’s preaching. But they daily searched in the Bible themselves, to see if it was true. That is why I recommend also doing this when confronted with the question about the right church of Jesus. A short Bible study is a good method to use.

But first, let’s take a look at the three questions that the pastor asked. These questions are an important prerequisite for a successful study of this question.

1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ taught the truth and practiced it in His life?

Jesus said:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6 NKJV) *“Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you ...”* (Matthew 28:20 NKJV)

Peter said:

“Jesus committed no sin; He died for our sins.” (1 Peter 2:22-24)

“... Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.” (1 Peter 2:21 NKJV)

We should and want to follow His example in all things. That is why John said:

“He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (1 John 2:6 NKJV)

I believe that Jesus taught and revealed divine truth and that His whole life was an example for us. Every true Christian believes this. This is the first requirement for our purpose. Do you believe this too?

2. Do you believe that the true church of Jesus has to concur with the teachings and example of Jesus?

Does the church of Jesus today – after almost 2,000 years – still have to concur with Jesus? Wasn't there any ongoing development? What did Jesus Himself say?

Jesus said:

“... the Scripture cannot be broken.” (John 10:35 NKJV)

Here, Jesus referred to the Old Testament. Naturally, this applies to the whole Bible including the New Testament. According to Jesus the Scripture cannot be “broken”. When you break something, then you have multiple pieces. Jesus is conveying here that we cannot at will accept one part and reject another part. John said in complete agreement with Jesus: *“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.”* (2 John 9 NKJV) This is a clear denial of any ongoing development of Biblical teachings. What God has revealed through His Son (Hebrews 1:1) cannot, may not and doesn't need to be improved by humans.

The apostle Paul said: *“But even if we [the apostles], or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”* (Galatians 1:8-9)

Even the apostles or the angels don't have the right to change the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, no one else may either. Thus, we have

established: The church of Jesus today has to concur with Jesus Christ and His word.

Do you believe this as well?

3. Are you ready to join the church of Jesus now when you find it?

Why is this willingness important now before the study begins? Jesus said:

“If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God ...” (John 7:17 NKJV)

Jesus was saying: Whoever wants to do God’s will, will also discern it. God will help those, who have a sincere desire to know and do God’s will, to know the truth and thus also know the church of Jesus. A divine promise says: *“He [God] holds success in store for the upright ...”* (Proverbs 2:7 NIV) – God has promised the Holy Spirit’s help to those, who are obedient to Him (Acts 5:32). He has promised to guide us into all truth (John 14:26 and John 16:13). Most certainly, this includes the truth about His church. A wonderful book about Jesus’ life says: *“To those who thus yield themselves to God, having an honest desire to know and to do His will, the truth is revealed as the power of God for their salvation.”* (E.G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 455.3) Are you ready to join the church of Jesus when you have found it?

Now, how can I find out for myself, what the true church of Jesus is?

There is a simple way. Study the gospel of Matthew. It has about 40 pages. It doesn’t contain all of the teachings of Jesus, but does include most of them. You might like to underline/highlight the verses about His teachings, His example and what is said about Him. I did the study as follows:

I used a notebook with margins on both sides of the page and divided it as follows:

I wrote the chapter and verse in the left margin.

I wrote in the left half of the main column the sentence or part of a sentence directly from the Bible, which contained a teaching or exemplary behavior of Jesus.

I wrote in the right half of the main column what teaching this sentence contained.

In the right margin, I made columns for each of the churches, which I wanted to examine (for example a column for the Catholic Church, Evangelical Church, Adventist Church and the Baptist Church).

I made a plus mark in each church’s column that supported that particular teaching.

In the end, the church, which had a plus mark for every teaching, concurs with Jesus’ teachings. This is the church of Jesus, which I want to join.

Bibel Passage	Bibel Text	Teaching	Churches			
			Cath.	Evan.	Adv.	Bapt.
Matthew 1:1	The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ.	This is history and not a myth or legend.	+	+	+	+
Matthew 1:18	Mary was found with child of the Holy Spirit.	Miracle of a birth from a virgin	+		+	+

I have often used a chapter or portion of a chapter in Matthew in Bible studies or as an additional study half an hour before the Bible study. The interest in this study was always very high. A man once said to me: “By the time I was in chapter four, I realized that I wasn’t in the right church.” You will find that you will only discover a portion of the truth the first time you do this study – as will your friends. But that doesn’t matter. Each time I did this study I discovered more and more truths. This study is a great help for truth seekers in making a decision for the church of Jesus.

May our marvelous God richly bless you in your ministry.

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What practical resources are there to help bring people closer to Jesus?*

2. *How can you proceed with a personal contact in order to arouse their interest in Jesus?*

3. *What questions can you use to get people to think about whether they have a relationship with Christ or want to deepen their relationship with Him?*

4. *What questions can you ask people, who are looking for the true church?*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... for wisdom to know what to say or to give other people so that their hearts are open for God's message.
 2. ... for the right preparation for missionary work.
 3. ... for the love for others, which is necessary to reach their hearts.
 4. ... for experiences with God in working for others.

NEW SPIRITUAL- MISSIONARY START IN THREE STEPS

How can individuals and groups,
churches and conferences experience this?

“My Spirit will accomplish it!”

“What you are planning will neither succeed by the might of an army nor by human strength; rather, my Spirit will accomplish it! I, the Lord God Almighty, promise this.” (Zechariah 4:6 translated from the German “Hoffnung fuer Alle” version)

I am very thankful that our Lord has revealed this concept to us through many small practical experiences. No one planned anything in this direction.

We will begin with an exemplary experience.

Experience from a church in Decatur, Alabama, USA:

“In April 2019 God led this church to concentrate on prayer and surrender to Jesus just before an evangelistic series. This was done with the intention of attaining greater success in their missionary endeavors.

... Our church’s orientation was adapted after Pastor Robert Meneses visited his family in Portugal at the beginning of the year. While there, his aunt gave him a small book in English and Portuguese with the title *Steps to Personal Revival* by Helmut Haubeil. At the same time, his wife, Elida, who is the church’s prayer coordinator, read in *Ministry* (international pastoral magazine) the testimony of a pastor about his experience with this book. After she read the book for herself, she was impressed that the church should read it as well. So, she took the book with her to the Sabbath morning prayer group, but amazingly enough another church member shared that a friend had given her a positive review of the same book.

During their preparation for the evangelistic series, the church assumed several new activities. They started to pray together every Sabbath morning at the church for 30 minutes. They also shared pointers in the church bulletin to promote prayer, revival and the work of the Holy Spirit. They held a video-seminar about the Holy Spirit in the church on two consecutive Sabbath evenings. After the seminar, copies of the book *Steps to Personal Revival* were distributed and the members were requested to read it during the next six weeks.

After that, they participated in the ‘Ten Days of Prayer’ initiative from the General Conference. The church members used this time to meet at church and pray for revival and the Holy Spirit. On the following Sabbath they had a special ‘praise and prayer’ church service.

Brian Danese, leader of church planting in the Gulf States Conference, came and held a weekend seminar. Next, the church started to study the *40-Days book: Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming* in groups of two. On Sabbath morning short video clips from Dennis Smith, the author of the 40-Days books, were shown during the announcement time.

They followed the suggestion in the book that each person should pray for five unreached people. Then they got in touch with these acquaintances or former church members. A good number of the baptisms came from this

group, which the church members had chosen to personally pray and care for.

Addendum: ‘We don’t know exactly how many church members participated. But think about it – when ten church members would each pray for and maintain contact with five people, that would be 50 people; 50 church members would then have 250 people. This creates a valuable circle of interested people for evangelistic series or care groups.’

When the evangelistic series started in April, the church experienced a revival and a deeper relationship with Jesus. During the lectures from Robert Meneses, the church members were able to deepen their relationships with the guests and the Holy Spirit worked on their hearts. After the lecture series, ten dear people gave their lives to Jesus through baptism and later on five more people. The church regards these results as a testimony to the power of prayer.”

(Adapted from the report by Elida Meneses, *Southern Tidings*, Sept. 2019, p. 20 – Southern Union Conference, USA EE EPM171119 #146)

This spiritual-missionary method works to win souls by God’s grace in the whole world, also in secular countries, because the power of the Holy Spirit isn’t limited. In countries that are more open, it is a great help to strengthen a new life and also for a joyful new beginning for inactive church members. In Burundi altogether 320 former church members returned because of the influence of the book *Steps to Personal Revival*. They were rebaptized into the church in March 2017.

THREE STEPS TO A NEW START

This church undertook the following three steps:

Step 1: New Start – Fostering the spiritual life

New spiritual start through intensive reading of the book *Steps to Personal Revival*.

Step 2: Fostering Relationships – Internally and Externally

They studied the book *40-Days Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming* by Dennis Smith to strengthen their spiritual life. Started intercessory prayer and reaching out to five unreached people.

Step 3: Sharing the Gospel

In this case, they held public meetings. But this can also take place in personal Bible studies or in small groups in homes personally or by video.

A closer look at the three steps

Now, we want to take a closer look at these three steps so that we can practically implement them.

STEP 1: NEW START – FOSTERING THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Foster your spiritual life – return to your first love – with the help of the book *Steps to Personal Revival*. (The book is available in more than 40 languages.)

More than 500 testimonials show that:

- ▶ The Holy Spirit is the greatest gift that Jesus has to offer us.
- ▶ This book opens our eyes and helps us make a correct self-evaluation of our spiritual condition.
- ▶ It helps us better understand the two basic steps, which make our spiritual life attractive and give us assurance of salvation.
- ▶ We experience that praying with promises gives our prayers a whole new quality. We pray with greater joy, confidence and depth. By praying with promises, many have received the assurance of receiving the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ In their great joy, they became witnesses and shared books and as a result their joy increased even more.

There are more than 160 experiences in English and German at: www.steps-to-personal.revival.info

The newest edition of this book is divided into 14 parts. You can either read the book spread out over six weeks or read it three times during this time for the greatest benefit. Great experiences are normally only achieved after multiple readings and practicing what is read. Educational research has shown that it is necessary to read or hear a vital topic six to ten times before a person thoroughly understands it. Try it out at least once. Almost all the good experiences are from people, who have grappled with the topic multiple times and with their whole heart. People in a hurry don't profit anything.

It is a good opportunity to study the 10 Days of Prayer 2021 readings before or after studying *Steps to Personal Revival*.

In the announcement of the 10 Days of Prayer (ANN: Oct. 24, 2020) the General Conference (GC) wrote: "Next year's 10 Days of Prayer program stands under the theme 'SEEKING REVIVAL' and focuses on the importance of experiencing personal revival and the joy of complete surrender to God in every aspect of life ... - The daily readings were written by Pastor Helmut Haubeil ..."

These readings are, so to speak, a short version of the small book series *Steps to Personal Revival*.

I intend to ask the GC for permission to add the 10 days of prayer 2021 to our website www.steps-to-personal-revival.info: 10 Days of Prayer. There they can be downloaded or shared at any time. Someone wants to make use of them. We will also mention the corresponding book and chapter for each day, so that people can profit from the supplemental reading. (The books are available in many languages on the website.) This spiritual deepening will lead to strength and joy.

Day 35

STEP 2: FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPs INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

Internally

A very good and reliable guide for 40-Days of prayer is the *40-Days book 1: Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming*, by Dennis Smith (R&H). The book is divided in five sections with eight lessons each:

- ▶ The baptism of the Holy Spirit;
- ▶ Spirit baptism and prayer;
- ▶ Spirit baptism and evangelism;
- ▶ Spirit baptism and abiding in Christ;
- ▶ Spirit baptism and fellowship.

The following tips are taken from the *40-Days book No. 1*, p. 5-6, introduction – partially adapted:

This 40-Days of study and prayer devotional is designed to prepare God's church for Christ's second coming, as well as to reach out to others in preparation for that glorious event.

This preparation begins with church members who are willing to commit to 40-Days of prayer and devotional study to develop a closer personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and to reach out to five individuals who the Lord has put on your heart to pray for every day.

Jesus said, *"If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them of my Father in heaven"* (Matthew 18:19 NKJV). There is great power in united prayer, and there is encouragement and spiritual strength in Christian fellowship. It is suggested that you find a prayer partner to fellowship and pray with. Share with each other about what you have read that day and pray together, either on the phone or in person, every day during the 40-Days of prayer and study.

To gain the greatest benefit, I recommend that you find several individuals to join with you in using this devotional book. It would be well to meet weekly as a group to share and pray together. Choose one in the group to become your daily fellowship-prayer partner. Married couples have reported a special blessing, when they studied together. One couple wrote: "Reading and praying together has led us to such a closeness and oneness, which we have never before experienced." Each participant in the group will do the same so that he/she may receive the greatest blessings during the 40 days ... Those on your prayer list may be family members, friends or coworkers. **A daily prayer list page is provided for this purpose in appendix E.**

Externally

Special Intercessory Prayer for Five People

During the 40 days you will pray for these five people every day and reach out to them. There are suggestions of how you can reach out to someone and how you can let them know that you will be praying for them for 40 days and at the same time ask what they would like you to pray for in their behalf. You can find this in appendix A and B at the end of the book. Why prayer?

Prayer is the most powerful force on earth. It is essential for one's personal spiritual growth and is the most effective means of reaching others

for Christ. Concerning prayer and the Christian's spiritual growth, Ellen White wrote:

“Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Wellspring of life and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor.” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 254)

Mrs. White also recognized the necessity of prayer in leading others to Christ: “Through much prayer you must labor for souls, for this is the only method by which you can reach hearts. It is not your work, but the work of Christ who is by your side, that impresses hearts.” (*Evangelism*, p. 341) “The Lord will hear our prayers for the conversion of souls.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 315)

As you prayerfully consider the suggested ways (see appendix B) to reach out to those whom you are praying you will not only be praying for them, you will also be working to bring them closer to Christ and His church. God will bless your efforts when you pray for, and work for, those on your prayer list. He will not only use you to win others to Christ; He will draw you close to Himself. Ellen White understood this double blessing when she wrote:

“As you work to answer your own prayers, you will find that God will reveal Himself unto you. ... Begin now to reach higher and still higher. Prize the things of heaven above earthly attractions and inducement. ... Learn how to pray; learn how to bear a clear and intelligent testimony, and God will be glorified in you.” (*The Upward Look*, p. 256)

“Their persevering prayers will bring souls to the cross. In cooperation with their self-sacrificing efforts Jesus will move upon hearts, working miracles in the conversion of souls.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 27)

Why 40 days?

- ▶ Moses spent 40 days on Mount Sinai with God
- ▶ Nineveh received 40 days of “grace” when Jonah called the city to repentance.
- ▶ Jesus prepared Himself for His ministry for 40 days.
- ▶ Jesus spent 40 days with His disciples before His ascension.

What were the disciples supposed to wait for?

After His resurrection, Jesus told his disciples that they were to wait to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit before they went forth to proclaim the gospel to the world: *“And being assembled together with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which,”* He said, *“you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”* Therefore, when they had come together they asked him, saying, *“Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”* and he said to them, *“It is not for you to know times and seasons which the Father has put in his own authority. 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 1:4-8 NKJV)

Even though they had spent the past three and a half years daily with Christ and had seen and participated in a ministry of miracles, they were not ready to witness for Him. They were to wait to receive the *power*. After they received the baptism (infilling) of the Holy Spirit, which took place on the day of Pentecost, they would be empowered as never before to witness for Christ: *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* (Acts 2:1-4 NKJV) What was the order: prayer, reception of the Holy Spirit, joyful preaching of the gospel. (See also Acts 4:31.)

Double Blessing

By choosing to participate in 40-Days of study and prayer, you are entering into an amazing and blessed adventure with the Lord. You will experience a deeper relationship with Christ, and you will see the Lord use you to draw others closer to Himself in preparation for His soon return. As you fellowship with your prayer partner and the others participating in the 40-Days of prayer and devotional study, you will experience a deeper Christian love and unity with your fellow believers. This will play an important role in your personal spiritual growth.

In order to get the most from the experience, it is recommended that this be the first thing you do in the morning. It may require rising a little earlier, but the effort will be well rewarded! If you ask the Lord to wake you so you can have some quality time with Him, He will hear and answer your prayer. Concerning Christ's devotional life Ellen White wrote:

“Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed.” (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 139)

Christ will do the same for you, if you ask Him. He very much desires to anoint you with His Holy Spirit in preparation for each new day.

KEY FACTOR: CHURCH MEMBERS TAKING PART IN MISSION WORK

This ministry for our fellowmen is a way to great joy and to personal growth in faith and it leads people to salvation in Christ. Thus a few more suggestions:

Ask God who you should pray for.

During these 40 days you are called on to pray daily for five people. Ask God to guide you in choosing these people.

Choose five people that you want to pray for.

You probably have relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbors, acquaintances, former or non-active church members on your list, who you want to especially minister to during the 40 days by reaching out to them or inviting them for example to a special event at the church – people that are in the immediate vicinity.

Reach out to the five people, who you have chosen.

If you want, you can reach out to them immediately – shortly before the 40 days start. Others pray 20 or 30 days for these people and then reach out and tell them why and what they were praying for and invite them to a visitor Sabbath in the church, which is held at the end of the 40 days with a special program. We prepare ourselves through prayer before reaching out to these people.

How can we learn about the concerns of our acquaintances?

We can say to our acquaintance: “Our church has planned a special time of prayer for six weeks. We have been asked to pray for a number of people during this time. I would like to pray for you. May I ask what prayer requests you have concerning health, family or work?”

Thank them for this opportunity and give them either *Letter to Andrew number 4 Pascal's bet – is there a God? Or isn't there?* or if the visitor's Sabbath is taking place soon, then invite them and offer to pick them up or meet them at the church entrance.

Make notes: name, telephone number, email, address, prayer request, observations and how the contact went.

Pray daily for these people.

This is a good opportunity to claim promises. You will find “Promises for Intercessory Prayer” in appendix A.

How can we demonstrate our interest?

We want to show our interest to these five people. You can find ideas for this in appendix B: Suggestions on how to reach out to people. An important suggestion is to share encouraging literature, especially interesting biblical tracts. That's why we have the *Letters to Andrew*. In chapter 9 page 157 it shows what is usually the best order to use them. If you have prepared for this contact through intensive prayer, these tracts will usually fall on the fertile soil of the heart.

We are told: “I have been shown that we were not doing our duty in the gratuitous circulation of small publications. There are many honest souls who might be brought to embrace the truth by this means alone. ... These small tracts of four, eight, or sixteen pages, can be furnished for a trifle, from a fund raised by the donations of those who have the cause at heart.” (*1T* 551,552 and *ChS* 151.2 egwwritings.org)

40-Days Instruction Manual for Leaders

A 40-Days instruction manual, including evangelistic meetings at the end, is available from Dennis Smith. The manual is available for free at: www.40daysdevotional.com

Visitors Sabbath

At the end of the 40 days a special visitor day is planned in the church or in a care group. This should be well prepared under prayer.

On the visitor Sabbath the guests are invited to the evangelistic series, which begins within the next few days or at the latest in a week either in the church or in a care group.

Day 36

STEP 3: SHARING THE GOSPEL

This can be done with Bible studies or evangelistic series in care groups or churches or if the conference plans, it could take place in all the churches in the conference at the same time. Many conferences and even unions or whole countries have held hundreds or thousands of evangelistic series at the same time with regional preachers as well as preachers from abroad.

(We call this evangelistic thrust “Total Member Involvement”.

<https://tmi.adventist.org>)

Video series for teaching faith

We repeat: Today we have really good tools to instruct and to develop faith in God and His Word, if no teacher is available. To teach the gospel, please look for evangelistic series that contain all the important Bible truths. The series with 20 – 30 presentations are best. In Appendix F you will find short descriptions of websites and what you can find there. These pages are valuable for children, youth, truth seekers and longtime believers. Also mentioned is the website from the GC Total Member Involvement: Material – Tips. This contains tips for Evangelism, Literature Distribution, diverse series on Health and Wellness, Diabetes, Depression Recovery and a Cooking School. In appendix F you will find a treasure chest of valuable websites.

Further work before or after the evangelistic series: Discipleship Course

It is very important that the newly baptized members take part in a discipleship course. Our wonderful book, *The Steps to Christ* by Ellen White, can be recommended the world over. (It is available at our publishing houses with several different titles.) It is our most translated book and is available in about 150 languages. The book is divided into two main sections and has 13 chapters. The two main sections are “How do I come to Christ?” and “How do I abide in Christ?” Naturally, a person can read the book alone, but it can also be read in small groups in a discussion group for interested people or youth or in the Pastor’s Bible Class.

The Pastor's Bible Class

This special discussion group is a very valuable provision and serves as a baptismal class. But we don't use this term. This group studies with the aid of special instructions questions of personal Christianity (i.e. with Steps to Christ) and the basic biblical truths. Preferably, the class is in a separate room. The only church members who attend this class, are those who are accompanying a guest. Those accompanying a guest are more sensitive when asking questions or making comments. The group is led by the pastor or another suitable teacher. In many countries the class is called the “**Pastor's Bible class**”, because it is led by the pastor when possible. Candidates for baptism (youth and friends of the church) have the opportunity of being taught from God's word once a week in addition to their usual weekly Bible study. In many countries this Bible class is one of the most effective methods of winning people for Jesus. This group is evangelism during the church service.

Mission Sabbath

Our fathers of faith had very practical solutions in many areas. One of them was a mission Sabbath. Once a month – usually the first Sabbath in the month – a mission Sabbath was held in every church. The basic idea was that motivation for mission work needed constant “oil”. The significance of a monthly mission Sabbath is to revive and maintain the spirit of mission. It requires care in word and deed. Either a dedicated person or a small group has to assume the responsibility of preparing this Sabbath. This kind of Sabbath will gradually become a great joy and necessity. Key words: short mission film, fresh mission songs, mission experiences, good news, mission children's story, mission sermon, mission service or mission visitations.

What are the next steps?

It is recommended to repeat this three-step program often. The first time, a number of church members will experience encouragement from this message and the second time another group will join them in joyful and fruitful life. Each time new truth seekers will come. And it is valuable for newly baptized members. They also desperately need repetition. And our task of leading people to Christ should consistently take place. We need repetition, since we live in such hectic and extraordinary times. I was amazed to read two things in the following:

“In every church the members should be so trained that they will devote time to the winning of souls to Christ. . . . Peculiar and rapid changes will soon take place, and God’s people are to be endowed with the Holy Spirit, so that with heavenly wisdom they may meet the emergencies of this age.” (3TT 69)

The books used in the first effort can readily be used again. But the book *Abide in Jesus* by Helmut Haubeil should also be considered because it helps build a close relationship with Christ. It is divided into the following study chapters:

- ▶ Jesus’ Most Precious Gift
- ▶ Surrender to Jesus
- ▶ Jesus abiding in you
- ▶ Obedience through Jesus
- ▶ Attractive Faith through Jesus.

Another possibility is the *40-Days book 2: Prayers and Devotions to Revive Your Experience with God* by Dennis Smith. There are eight readings per topic: A people with amazing experiences, A people who wait on God, Our sovereign God, Difficult but necessary experiences, A people ready to meet Jesus.

Both of these books coordinate with book one of the *40-Days books* and *Steps to Personal Revival* and are built on it.

What experiences have people had?

The wonderful experience from the church in Cologne-Kalk/Germany and how it grew from 17 to 65 members in just 4 years because they used and repeated this method every year, is told in detail in www.steps-to-personalrevival.info, Testimonies 2/19.

The results depend on if the Holy Spirit can work through us. We are limiting in this report to experiences from secular countries:

- ▶ USA – Decatur, Alabama: Told at the beginning of this chapter: 15 baptisms
- ▶ Switzerland – Tessin: 15 baptisms through 40-Days groups.
- ▶ Tajikistan – Dushanbe: 46 baptisms in a year through 40-Days efforts.
- ▶ England: 22 baptisms through spiritual orientated work.

Final Experience

A pastor testified that when he realized his powerlessness, he decided to thoroughly study the topic of the Holy Spirit in the Bible: “Eventually I studied 273 texts in the original languages that directly speak to the work of the Holy Spirit, and I found well over 2,000 unique quotes in Ellen White’s writings on the subject.”¹⁰

May I ask: Was it without any doubt God’s intention for the end of time, which prompted Him to have Ellen White mention the Holy Spirit more than 2,000 times? Does He want to give His final church power, authority and victory? Does He want to bring us to the finish line in this way?

The pastor continued to share that Jesus asked him three questions:

“Do you love my people?”

“Are you preaching the gospel each week with passion for lost souls? ”

“Do you seek praise from men?”

The tears began to flow as I confessed my sin.

That year 37 people gave their lives to Jesus. In the years since that night, hundreds of people have made decisions for Christ. May the Lord Jesus be praised forever!”¹¹

What is the first step to revival?

Our marvelous God answers this question personally in 2 Chronicles 7:12-14 NKJV:

“Then the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: I have heard your prayer. ... If My people ... will [1] humble themselves, and [2] pray and [3] seek My face, and [4] turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

“‘Humble themselves’

... this is the first directive in a series of four conditions in this message from God. Before we’re told to pray or to seek or to turn, we’re told to humble ourselves. ... We usually turn a deaf ear to a problem until there’s a nuclear meltdown, and we’re forced to listen. ... It becomes clear in the film ‘Titanic’ that the ship captain and his officers did not want to listen to the warnings of the iceberg field which they were heading towards.

¹⁰ *Seeking God’s Spirit*, January 8. – 18.,2020, Day 4, p. 36 – www.tendaysofprayer.org

¹¹ ditto, p. 37, We just mentioned the main thoughts.

We humans often don't listen until it's too late. Why? Because we seldom like what we hear – especially if what we hear challenges us to change an opinion, a way of life, an attitude, or a behavior.”¹²

Shouldn't we daily ask Jesus to give us a humble heart so that He can do “great and marvelous things” through us?

Advice and Prayer: What should we do with the three steps?

We want to take the time for prayer and contemplation for the preliminary thoughts on how we can implement the suggestions in chapter 10 *New Spiritual-Missionary Start in Three Steps* (see the questions on the next page).

The Corona virus crisis has had an effect on our lives, which we never could have believed possible. When we invite our neighbors to a care group to discuss “Ways to Improve your Immune System”, then we can speak about the meaning of a personal relationship with God (Psalm 91) and about the eight ways to health (Newstart) or Newstart-Plus. Our goal should be to show others the advantages, which they don't have yet. May the Lord bless you in your contemplation and prayer.

12 Randy Maxwell, *If My People Pray* (Pacific Press 1995), p. 72.

Personal thoughts and discussion guide

1. *What three steps are vital for a spiritual new start?*

2. *Write down the names of five people, who you want to particularly pray for.*

3. *Prayerfully consider what possibilities you have for conducting Bible studies/ care groups and/or evangelistic meetings.*

4. *What experiences have other people/groups had? Look more closely at these experiences.*

Our Prayer Time

- Contact your prayer partner and discuss the topic with them.
- Pray with your prayer partner ...
 1. ... for a new spiritual start – personally and in your church.
 2. ... for the five people you wrote down.
 3. ... to discern what possibilities you have personally and as a group/ church to work for and with God.
 4. ... for experiences, where God has guided your work.

BEING SPIRIT-FILLED ANEW EVERY DAY!

What do others have to say about the necessity of continually asking for the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: “The baptism of the Spirit is not a onetime event; we can experience it daily. We need to plead with the Lord for that baptism because it gives the church power to witness and to proclaim the gospel. To do this we must continually surrender our lives to God, abide fully in Christ, and ask Him for wisdom to discover our gifts (James 1:5).”¹³

Carlos Steger: “Baptism with the Holy Spirit means to be totally under the influence of the Spirit, completely ‘filled with the Spirit’ (Ephesians 5:18 NKJV). This is not a ‘once and forever’ experience, but is something that needs to be constantly renewed.”¹⁴

Frank Hasel: “While the Spirit is given by the hearing of faith (Galatians 3:2) and is received through faith (Galatians 3:14) at our baptism (Titus 3:5-6), we need to seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit every day. We can’t live off a powerful experience that we had last year or last month or even yesterday. We need the infilling of God’s Spirit each day, for each day brings its own challenges.”¹⁵

Johannes Mager: “According to this, the infilling of the Holy Spirit is not a onetime experience, but rather it is a recurring and progressive process. A Christian isn’t like a vessel that has been filled once and for all, rather he has to let himself be continually ‘refilled’. ... The infilling of the Holy Spirit, which we received at our baptism, can be lost when the fullness that was given isn’t retained. If it has been lost, then it can be received again.”¹⁶

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- 13 *Seventh-day Adventists Believe - A Biblical Exposition of 27 (28) fundamental doctrines*, Copyright by the Ministerial Association General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Chapter 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries, p. 213.2 – www.CarenageSeventh-day-Adventist-ChurchTrinidadandTobago, 16.8.2020
- 14 *Adult Bible Study Guide – Standard Edition – July 17, 2014*, Principle Contributor: Carlos Steger
- 15 *Adult Bible Study Guide – Standard Edition – January 30, 2017*, Principle Contributor: Frank Hasel
- 16 *Auf den Spuren des Heiligen Geistes*, Advent-Verlag (Lüneburg 1999), S. 101

David Wolkwitz: “First of all, we will show how important it is to be filled with the Spirit. ... In the end we will discover that this infilling is the central point of the new covenant. And we want to be aware of God’s wooing, who wants us to receive this blessing day after day.”¹⁷

Ekkehardt Müller: “In addition, it must be remembered that the infilling of the Holy Spirit follows rebirth, but it isn’t a process that functions automatically. The relationship has to be renewed daily.”¹⁸

Dennis Smith: “Another important point is that the infilling with the Spirit has to be daily renewed. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:31 ‘*I die daily!*’ The dying of self and the infilling of the Holy Spirit is a daily experience. It isn’t a ‘once and for all’ experience. Paul said that ‘*the inward man is being renewed day by day*’ (2 Corinthians 4:16). We need renewal from the Spirit every day of our lives. Paul challenged us with the words ‘*be filled with the Spirit*’ (Ephesians 5:18). The verb in this verse is in the continuous tense, which means in Greek that we should do it daily. By being filled with the Spirit, the believer is then led by Him.”¹⁹

Ellen G. White:

- “For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God.”²⁰
- “that even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace.”²¹
“Through the cunning devices of the enemy the minds of God’s people seem to be incapable of comprehending and appropriating the promises of God. ... The power of God awaits their demand and reception.”²²

¹⁷ *Der Weg zu einer kraftvollen Erweckung* (Hrsg. Abteilung Heimatmission, Gemeinschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten in Nordrhein-Westfalen), S. 102, 103, ohne Datum.

Abschnitt “Lasst euch erfüllen” (Ephesians 5,18)

¹⁸ *Die Lehre von Gott* (Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen 2019), S. 224

¹⁹ *10 Days – Prayers and Devotions to Experience the Baptism of the Holy Spirit*, Dennis Smith
10 Tage – Translated from the German Version: Andachten und Gebete zur Erfahrung der Taufe mit dem Heiligen Geist. (Konrad Print & Medien, Rudersberg/Württemberg), S. 48

²⁰ *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50.2, *Das Wirken der Apostel* (Saatkorn, Hamburg 1976), S. 52, [50, 51]

²¹ *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 56.1, *Das Wirken der Apostel* (Saatkorn, Hamburg 1976), S. 57, [55, 56]

²² *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 174.2

REVIVAL!

What do others say about revival? What does revival mean? Can we do something about it?

Ellen G. White: What does revival mean? “Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death.”²³

Mark Finley: Can we do something about it? “Revival doesn’t happen when we simply read about it, but rather when we put into practice the biblical elements of a revival.”²⁴

D. Martin Lloyd-Jones: “When God sends a revival, then He can accomplish more in a day than through 50 years of our organized attempts.”²⁵

Charles G. Finney: “Revival is nothing other than a new beginning of obedience to God (Revelation 2:5) [Returning to your first love].”²⁶

Dennis Smith: “The infilling of the Holy Spirit gives the Laodicean-Christians the necessary strength for a spiritual revival as well as the strength to witness. Jesus knew how important the outpouring of the Holy Spirit would be to the early rain at Pentecost. He said: *‘I came to send a fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!’* (Luke 12:49) But how can the Laodicean-Christians experience the infilling of the Holy Spirit as well as a revival? In the same way as always – by praying and claiming God’s promises.”²⁷

LeRoy E. Froom: “God cannot do anything revolutionary with people before He has done something revolutionary for them, by the Holy Spirit entering their lives.”²⁸

23 *Selected Messages Book 1, 1SM, 128.1*

24 *Belebe uns neu* (Advent-Verlag Lüneburg, 2011), S. 25 (*Revive us again*, PPPA 2010)

25 *Vollmacht* (Franke, Marburg 1984) S. 105

26 Ch. G. Finney, *Über Geistliche Erweckung* (Harfe-Verlag, Aarburg 1976), S. 5

27 *40-Days of Prayers and Devotions to prepare for the second coming, 40 Tage-Andachten und Gebete zur Vorbereitung auf die Wiederkunft Jesu* (Wien 2012), S. 103

28 *Das Kommen des Heiligen Geist* (Edelstein 1995), S. 100

BLESSING

“Abiding in Christ means:

- ▶ **a constant receiving of His Spirit,**
- ▶ **a life of unreserved surrender**
- ▶ **to His service.”** (E.G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 676.2)

May this message help us to daily ask for and receive the Holy Spirit through claiming promises in prayer and help us to daily completely surrender to Jesus and His service, so that we lead a fruitful life to His honor and our joy.

I recommend that you carefully study John 15:1-17. Jesus shows us in the parable of the vine and the branches:

- V. 2 Branches without fruit will be cut off and burned!
Branches bearing fruit will be pruned so that they bear more fruit!
- V. 4 Only when we abide in Jesus do we bear fruit!
- V. 5 Whoever abides in Jesus, bears much fruit!
- V. 8 God is glorified with much fruit!
- V. 16 Our task is to bear fruit!

Prayer: “Father in heaven, we ask you that we daily bear fruit to your honor through fellowship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Please help us to be filled with Your love so that we can serve You by serving our fellowmen. Lead us in our intercessory prayers and personal contacts. Give us an enthusiastic and victorious life to your honor and glory, for the salvation and blessings of our fellowmen as well as for our own salvation and joy. AMEN.”

RECOMMENDATION

Important advice: Read this book or the most important passages or chapters for you – if possible – six times in succession. Educational research has shown that we have to read or hear important topics for our life six to ten times before we can thoroughly understand it.

At least give it a try. The results will convince you. I have received many grateful and enthusiastic testimonies about people's new life in the Holy Spirit. Almost all of these testimonies come from readers, who have intensely devoted themselves to repeatedly reading the material.

Please share your new experiences

A friendly request: When you have experiences in your life with the Holy Spirit – in your personal faith experience or in witnessing to others – then we would be thankful if you would send a short message to Helmut Haubeil for publication. We usually only print the first letters of the person's name.

Please bear in mind that your experience can motivate others to start a life with the Holy Spirit, to grow and to serve Jesus by serving others.

Contact:

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Email: helmut@haubeil.net

BIOGRAPHY

Helmut Haubeil is a businessman and a pastor. After successfully working as an authorized representative for a freight company, he accepted God's call at the age of 37 to become a pastor and worked 16 years for the church.

After that he was the leader of the Adventist retirement home in Bad Aibling.

Since he retired, he is leader of the support group for Revival and Global Mission in this church.

He doesn't see himself as the author of the book *Steps to Personal Revival*, which is the basis for this series. He never had the intention of writing a book. But God led him down this path. The authority, which we can obtain for our life of faith and our service, doesn't lay in these little books, but rather on the Giver of the gift – our wonderful Lord.

I have passed on tracts or copies of sermons as often as possible. Our wonderful God showed His messenger that such documents can break the walls of prejudice and superstition. And – a whole new interest can arise. I am grateful that I was able to experience this often and still do. I find the following quote very valuable:

“I have been shown that the publications already have been doing a work upon some minds in other countries in breaking down the walls of prejudice and superstition. I was shown men and women studying with intense interest papers and few pages of tracts upon present truth. They would read the evidences so wonderful and new to them, and would open their Bibles with a deep and new interest, as subjects of truth that had been dark to them were made plain, especially the light in regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. As they searched the Scriptures to see if these things were so, a new light shone upon their understanding, for angels were hovering over them, and impressing their minds with the truths contained in the publications they had been reading.” (*Christian Service*, p 149.7; *ChS*, 149.7)

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Promises for Intercessory Prayer

We can find in the introduction of the *40-Days Books vol. 1, 2 and 3* by Denis Smith additional promises for intercessory prayer.

1. Please Father, draw him/her to You (John 6:44).
2. Please Father, place the desire in their hearts to seek You (Acts 17:27).
3. Please Father, help them to believe Your word (1 Thessalonians 2:13).
4. Please Father, destroy Satan's influence over them (2 Corinthians 4:4; 10:4-5).
5. Please Father, let them be influenced by the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-13)
6. Please Father, help them to turn away from sin (Acts 3:19).
7. Please Father, help them to accept Christ as their Savior (John 1:12).
8. Please Father, help them to obey Christ as their Lord (Matthew 7:21).
9. Please Father, help them to grow in Christ and to become rooted in Him (Col. 2:6-7).

Appendix B: Suggestions of How to Reach Out to People

1. Show them what you appreciate about them.
2. Give them encouraging literature (*Letters to Andrew*).
3. Call them and pray with them. (If they are open to this.)
4. Invite them over to a meal at your house.
5. Invite them out to eat at a restaurant.
6. Send them birthday wishes on their birthday.
7. Send them an encouraging card or something else that God places on your heart.
8. Give them something that you have cooked or baked yourself.
9. Invite them to join you shopping, visiting a museum, etc.
10. If needed, send them a "Get Well" card or something else to show your sympathy.
11. Give their child a birthday card or make them a present, if appropriate.
12. Give them interesting biblical tracts (for example, the *Letters to Andrew*)
13. Invite them to go to church with you.

14. In due time, ask them if they would like to have Bible studies.
15. Valuable advice: recommend a New Start course in one of our Adventist health centers in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Romania, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Estonia, Portugal, USA, Israel, etc. These programs are extremely invaluable for the body and soul through the combination of trust in God and natural remedies. According to a study, a positive relationship with God is the greatest factor for good health. In addition, it strengthens the other health factors (diet, exercise, rest, etc.) by more than three times. The study was conducted under the leadership of Prof. Grossarth-Maticzek on 35,000 people over a period of 30 years. (Doctors Manfred Heide, Marvin H. Heide & Michaela Heide-Fassbender, *Medical Wellness with Newstart-Plus*, Engelsdorfer 2014, p. 334)
16. We can also give people that believe in God the book *Steps to Personal Revival*; it is about a life with the Holy Spirit. The book is free of charge in poor countries; in other countries there is a minimal charge and has already helped many people have living faith.

(The order address is on page 2 in the books and also in the appendix.)

As we get to know our fellowmen better, then other good ideas will come to mind.

Appendix C: The Way to Eternal Life

The pamphlet *The Way to Eternal Life* can be downloaded or sent free of charge at www.steps-to-personal-revival.info. It can be found under: *Experience God – Letters to Andrew*. It is also in the Starter-Set.

Appendix D: Summary of Letters to Andrew

LA No. 1 – Christian Faith put to the Test

Everything hinges on honestly answering three questions. I have taken this path hundreds of times and have repeatedly experienced positive reactions and amazement.

1. Does a living, all-knowing and all-powerful God exist, who loves humans?
2. Is Jesus of Nazareth really the redeemer sent by God?
3. Was the Bible or the Holy Scriptures really written by people under God's authority or is it merely a human product?

There are very satisfactory answers to these fundamental questions. See for yourself. Perhaps you weren't familiar with this introduction until now.

LA No. 2 – Unique and beyond comparison: Jesus of Nazareth

The greatest character in the history of the world – unique and beyond comparison. What impact did Jesus' life have? Why is Jesus so unique? Why did His life leave such a lasting impression, like no other biography? Who did Jesus say that He was? What did eyewitnesses say, what does history say? What did genuine doubters discover when they examined the facts?

LA No. 3 – What is the main focus of the Bible?

God's plan of redemption is portrayed in a short and spirited manner in this *Letter to Andrew*. What must one do to receive fullness of life and eternal life? Large surveys showed that 98% of people questioned, had a false perception of what the main focus of the Bible was. This letter clearly shows that redemption is a gift of God and cannot and doesn't need to be earned. It is awesome when this truth becomes clear to someone!

LA No. 4 – Pascals Bet: Does God exist or not? What are the chances?

Generally, this bet is known as "Pascal's bet". Blaise Pascal came to the conclusion that every sensible person had to decide for Jesus Christ even if the chances of the accuracy of the Christian teachings lay at only 50:50. Dr. Viggo Olson, a well-known surgeon and a determined opponent of faith, encountered Blaise Pascal's statements. He and his wife fought tooth and nail against the Christian faith. But after intensive studies he became a staunch Christian. Every person has to make a decision. A person has to build their life either on the assumption that the Christian teachings are true or on the assumption that they are false. Whoever doesn't enter this bet, automatically places a bet on the possibility that the Christian teachings are false.

LA No. 5 – Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol

The tremendous experience of Adolf is told in this letter. He was a 39-year-old truck driver, who smoked 60-70 cigarettes a day. At the same time, this is a valuable introduction to praying with promises. Since there are more than 3,000 promises, we can pray for many areas of our lives with the assurance that our prayer will be answered. It is like getting permission for unlimited withdrawal from “God’s account”. This marvelous gift of God is essential for everyone who wants to lead a victorious Christian life. How can someone become immediately and completely free from additions with God’s help? Whoever would like to know this should read this *Letter to Andrew*.

LA No. 6 – How do you know what the future holds?

This is a study of the prophetic book of Daniel, chapter 2. It is the basis for understanding the biblical books "Daniel" and "Revelation", both of which were written for our time. This prophecy reveals the emergence of certain world empires and the establishment of the kingdom of God. Of the six predictions, five have already been precisely fulfilled. We can therefore expect the sixth prediction to also be fulfilled. What is still to come? You will be glad to learn about this prophecy.

LA No. 7 – Prevention or healing?

This *Letter to Andrew* is very important in order to indirectly address prejudices in the area of belief and health. This is illustrated by the experience of Dr. Semmelweis. From whom does the science of preventive medicine come? Who helped save the lives of millions in the 14th century from the plague and in the 18th century from dysentery, cholera and typhoid? The Bible was 4,000 years ahead of science in reducing uterine cancer. How? A large-scale examination of the lifestyle of the Seventh-day Adventists shows the advantage of a healthy lifestyle. (Which is doubly important in a time of epidemics because our immune system depends on it.)

LA No. 8 – Prophecies about Jesus Christ

Probability of Fulfillment 1:10¹⁷

This *Letter to Andrew* especially strengthens trust in Jesus of Nazareth being the divine Redeemer and the Bible being inspired by God. Different prophecies and fulfillments about Jesus’ life are compared. Eight details show why the fulfillment of these prophecies is impossible from a human standpoint.

LA No. 9 – Prophecies about four cities

They were literally fulfilled, even though the mathematical probability was 1:200 trillion.

- The Golden Gate of Jerusalem
- The legendary Babylon
- The strange rock city of Petra
- Tyre’s rise and fall

LA No. 10 – Jesus and the Sabbath

What is the relationship between Jesus and the Biblical Sabbath? This *Letter to Andrew* shows how the Sabbath is connected to Jesus as the Creator, as the leader of God's people, as the divine Lawgiver, as the Redeemer, as the commissioner of the prophets, as a human being, as the crucified and risen One, as a counselor for the disciples, as the Lamb of God, as returning Lord, as judge of the world and as King of the new earth. Here you will find out what the Sabbath means for Jesus Christ and for all people.

LA No. 11 – What did Jesus say about Jerusalem, His second coming and the end of the world?

What can we learn from the “mini-judgement” which took place in 70 A.D.? This *Letter to Andrew* shows how valuable and helpful complete trust in Jesus’ words is. At that time, all the Christians were saved, because they solely oriented themselves by Jesus’ words. Simultaneously, one million extremely religious people, who had traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover, suffered a dreadful fate. What can we learn from the story of Jerusalem regarding the end of the world and Jesus’ second coming? What decision will we make?

LA No. 12 – Sign of the return of Jesus

Is the big turning point coming – or ... the end? The disciples asked: How will we know that you are coming and that the end of the world is here? Detailed information is given on the eight signs mentioned. What was it like before the fall of Jerusalem and what is the situation like today? Final question: Are we facing the big turning point or will it soon be the end?

LA No. 13 – Seize Life through a Personal Relationship with God

Assuming – You would die today (heart attack or accident). Do you have the assurance now of eternal life with Jesus Christ? Don’t remain in the dark! Five facts will help you find an answer. Whoever searches for a relationship with God, will make the discovery of a lifetime!

LA No. 14 – Life in God’s Strength – How?

“... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10 NKJV) Jesus wants us to experience this new life now and to continue it after His second coming as eternal life in God’s kingdom. This *Letter to Andrew* is about how we can have motivation and strength for a happy and consistent relationship to a life with Jesus.

LA No. 15 – Benefit from reading the Bible – How?

Maybe you once planned on studying for yourself the most widely read book in the world, the Bible. Some have started studying, but then quickly abandoned their plan. Probably because they hadn’t found the right way to start. You will find a 14-day test in this *Letter to Andrew*.

LA No. 16 – How can I experience God’s love and forgiveness?

How can I obtain forgiveness? How can the problem of my guilt be resolved? How does guilt originate? Why are there feelings of guilt without any real guilt? Why is deliverance from guilt necessary for our happiness? What is the best way to deal with guilt?

LA No. 17 – Do you have something against someone?

How can I forgive and forget? Forgiveness frees both parties! Why should we forgive others? How do I receive divine strength to forgive? How can I determine if I have really forgiven someone? What effect does it have on me and others when I forgive them?

Starter-Set Letters to Andrew

The Starter-Set contains all numbers which are necessary to start. These include No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14 and Z1. These numbers are also already available on the website.

All 17 *Letters to Andrew* will be available by the end of 2020. The order address, the offers and the missionary prices are under “Book Offers” on page 202. You can also download and send them for free at www.steps-to-personal-revival.info – *Letters to Andrew*

Appendix E: Daily Prayer List

Recommendation:

If possible, please note for every person:

First and Last Name: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

Prayer Requests:

Prior Notes:

Course of Contacts:

Appendix F: Video Series for Teaching Faith

Websites for Youth and People seeking God

Today we have really good tools to instruct and to develop faith in God and His Word, if no teacher is available. To teach the gospel, please look for evangelistic series that contain all the important Bible truths. The series, which have 20 or more presentations, are usually very suitable. May I recommend that the leader listen to certain subjects by himself beforehand, so that he can promote the series by mentioning certain features and so that he can assess whether the participants are ready for the message yet.

Endtime Messages from Jesus

Developed by the Ministerial Association of the SDA-Church; 6 volumes, 86 sermons: Prophecy, Doctrinal, Sermons on Health, Sermons for Families, In this, we believe. <https://www.gcevangelism.net/sermons/>

Total Member Involvement

The website from the General Conference has helpful advice and web addresses: Total Member Involvement <https://tmi.adventist.org/> – Materials TMI-tips: There are tips for Evangelism, Literature Distribution, Health and Wellness, Diabetes, Depression Recovery, Cooking School.

27 Bible Study Guides

Amazing Facts Bible Study Guides can be read online for free and even printed off for sharing and study. Several languages are available! www.amazingfacts/bible/studyguides

New Beginnings – Youth Edition

You can present 26 illustrated valuable Bible Studies with completely updated high-resolution graphics complete with presenter notes. (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French) <https://asiministries.org/newbeginnings/>

Lifting Up Jesus

Free download of 30 lessons in 10 languages, and 16 kids-lessons <http://www.liftingupjesus.net>

Unsealing Daniel's Mysteries

Download 12 topics for free by Mark Finley

<https://www.itiswritten.com/bible-studies-unsealing-daniels-mysteries>

Hope Awakens – Evangelistic series

20 presentations by John Bradshaw: Are you trying to make sense of today's unprecedented times? Are you prepared for what lies ahead? Are we really living during the end of times? Hope Awakens offers insight into today's most pressing topics. CDs \$ 59.99

<https://itiswritten.tv/programs/hope-awakens>

Time is Ticking Away – 20 Presentations

Pastor Doug says about this unique, power-packed Bible study series: "I meet a lot of people who are interested in future events but don't want to be drowned with religion. In this series, we investigate the Scriptures apart from traditional religious understanding so we can determine the real history and future of our planet. ... I look forward to sharing my research with you.

<https://www.amazingfacts.org/media-library/watch/archives/o/144/t/time-is-ticking-away>

Revelation's Ancient Discoveries

26 Presentations (3ABN); Mark Finley explores the great prophecies of the Bible revealing God's plan for our future.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ABN>

Videos on Holy Spirit and Prayer

27 presentations by Dennis Smith, 3 by Roy Ruggless, 5 by Colin Hone – you find them under "Video" and "Media". You can order the 40-Days-Books and more at the same address.

<https://www.spiritbaptism.org/>

How to be baptized with the Holy Spirit?

Dwight Nelson – 3 sermons

<https://steps-to-personal-revival.info/>

Steps to Personal Revival

Audiobook, 7 parts, Speaker: Mike Fenton

Videosermons, 7 parts by Helmut Haubeil

<http://steps-to-personal-revival.info>

Occult, Witchcraft and Satanism Epidemic

Sermon No. 11

<https://www.gcevangelism.net/sermons/>

Truth 4 Youth Evangelistic Series

For children 5-13 years of age

Young Disciple's *Truth 4 Youth* DVD series gives you the tools and resources you need to present a full evangelistic program to the single most important population group we can reach with the message.

A complete evangelistic series for children! By far the most effective "window" of time for reaching children with the gospel is between the ages of 5 and 13. In fact, **research by the Barna Institute shows that children between the ages of 5 and 13 are more than five times more likely than adults to make a lifelong commitment to Christ.**

\$ 129,99

www.itiswritten.shop/product/truth4youth

Youth program "Most Important Questions" – 10 Presentations

<https://www.amazingfacts.org/media-library/watch/archives/o/116/t/most-important-questions--miq->

Ultimate Purpose – 4 Presentations – This short Ultimate Purpose series is good on these basic questions as well:

<https://www.amazingfacts.org/medialib-ray/watch/archives/o/125/t/ultimate-purpose>

Formula 4 Faith – 6 Presentations

Covers the basics of salvation – Pastor Doug Batchelor takes you on a life-altering biblical journey to uncover the essential steps of salvation, win-
somerly leading you in a dynamic spiritual ...

<https://www.amazingfacts.org/medialibrary/watch/archives/o/156/t/formula-4-faith>

A heart-warming experience at the end

Louisa M. R. Stead was born in Dover/England and emigrated to the United States with her husband around 1880. The first months were very hard until her husband found work. Their first vacation was three days at the sea. Her husband tried to save a boy who was fighting for his life in the stormy sea. Both were hit by a strong wave and drowned.

Louisa was now without her husband and alone with her three-year-old daughter. After a few weeks, she had to leave her apartment because she could not pay the rent. She wrote in her diary:

“I cannot afford to keep my eyes on the problem when I have such a wonderful God who died for me. I want to look away from my problems and look to Jesus because he is willing and able to help us. If He's with me, I'm not afraid.”

She slept on a park bench with the child in her arms to warm her. Throughout the whole time, she did not ask for help, but praised God. She said:

“Lord, I have nothing right now, but there are people in the Bible who have lost everything and yet praised you. You don't have to bless me in order for me to praise You. I trust you and praise you for whatever I am experiencing.”

In the middle of the park – it was 1882 – Louisa began to write the song:

“Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus”

When she sang this song, a man stopped: “You must be doing very well, because you sing so beautifully.” She replied: **“I am not singing because I am fine. I am singing because I trust Jesus.”**

In the course of the conversation, the man found that she had no job, her husband had died, their food was running low and she had to spend the night on this bench with her daughter. He shook his head in disbelief. “And yet you sing ...?”

She replied: **“It's only a matter of time before Jesus intervenes. I'm happy just thinking about it.”**

It turned out that this gentleman was one of the richest men at the time. He owned all of the railroad lines in the United States. He offered her office work, which she was very happy to take on. She did this job so well that after a short while he said to her: “You work as if you fear God. You do it so well, regardless whether someone is watching you or not.” She replied:

“You don't understand it properly, I don't work for you, I work for Jesus.”

Her conscientious work and her pronounced organizational talent led to the fact that she was always promoted and that she was ultimately responsible for the complete organization across all railway lines. The owner put it like this: "I trust her more than myself." Her lifestyle changed. She got a very good salary, was able to buy a large house and also take good care of her daughter.

After two years she wrestled with the question, what would Jesus do in her place?

She quit her lucrative work, sold her house and went to South Africa with her daughter to work in the mission among blacks especially for children. After six months she had used up all her money. She traveled back to make money again. Then she went back to Zimbabwe with her daughter. She continued this lifestyle for the next 32 years, until her death in Zimbabwe in 1917. Her daughter continued her mother's work. Louisa lived a life of trust and commitment to her Master, whom she loved so much.

(Told in a sermon in Austria by P.G. Retranslated from German by Google translation.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His Word;
Just to rest upon His promise,
And to know, "Thus saith the
Lord!"
<i>Refrain</i> | 2. Oh, how sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to trust His cleansing blood;
And in simple faith to plunge me
'Neath the healing, cleansing flood!
<i>Refrain</i> |
| 3. Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just from sin and self to cease;
Just from Jesus simply taking
Life and rest, and joy and peace.
<i>Refrain</i> | 4. I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;
And I know that Thou art with me,
Wilt be with me to the end.
<i>Refrain</i> |

Refrain:

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er;
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
Oh, for grace to trust Him more!

(Melody: www.Louisa M.R.Stead)

Note: It has been decided differently in different areas:

Whether this book is V1 or V2 is indicated on the first page at the top right.

Version 1 (V1)

In this edition, the Starter-Set (the Letters to Andrew) is offered in an envelope along with the book. You can order additional copies at the publisher and possibly download them on their website and **www.steps-to-personal-revival.info**: Letters to Andrew – Starter-Set.

Version 2 (V2)

In this edition the Starter-Set (the Letters to Andrew) is included in the book starting at page 202. You can download copies from the website of the publisher or **www.steps-to-personal-revival.info**: Letters to Andrew – Starter-Set.



EXPERIENCE GOD

Letters to Andrew



A Practical Tool

*For the book "Spirit-Filled Coworkers of Jesus",
chapters 7-10*

By Helmut Haubeil

Dear Andreas

*Starter-Set
A Relationship
with Christ*

*Letters to Andrew
No. 1-5, 8,
13, 14, 21*

*With practical, tried and tested tools
to lead people to Jesus*

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. 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?	205
1 Christian Faith put to the test	211
8 Prophecies about Jesus Christ – Probability of Fulfilment 1:10¹⁷	217
2 Unique and beyond comparison: Jesus of Nazareth	223
3 What is the main focus of the Bible?	229
13 Seize Life through a personal relationship with God	237
Z1 In addition: The Way to Eternal Life	243
14 Life in God’s Strength – How?	247
5 Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol	256

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 in English and German.

* Andrew after the biblical Andrew in John 1:40-42. The reason – Andrew led his brother Peter to Jesus.



Pascal's Bet: Does God exist or not?

What are the chances? Blaise Pascal provides assistance

*Dear Andrew,**

There is a bet that surpasses every other:
Pascal's bet.

Who was Blaise Pascal?

Blaise Pascal was an outstanding French mathematician, physicist and inventor; a great mind in human history. He was a child prodigy. Already at the age of 11 he devised basic geometric theorems, which are still valid today.

Later, his brilliant intelligence enabled him to develop and found the principles of the theory of probability. He devised principles for logical thinking, which are still valid today.

When his father, who was a tax collector, was delayed by time-consuming calculations, Pascal developed the first calculating machine. This was an important foundation for the development of the modern calculating machines.

Pascal made many inventions and developed important theorems. At 31 years of age he developed personal faith in Jesus Christ. Later, he wrote a defense statement for the Christian faith, but wasn't able to complete it since he died at the age of 39.

The modern and still popular computer language is named after him – Pascal.

This great mind estimated the probability of God's existence at a fair 50:50. His thoughts, known as "Pascal's Bet" went down into history.

Is there a God? Is there no God?

He once asked his friends the following question: You say: There is no God. I say: God does exist. If you are right and there is no God, what would happen to me? Nothing actually. I would die and that would be it. Maybe I might not have enjoyed everything that is seen as indispensable. But is that such a great loss?

But if there is a God, then everything, literally everything, would be lost for you. You would die and would have to give account to God. Or do you think that God would put up with someone ignoring Him? Admittedly, you would have had everything here, nevertheless you would lose everything.

A Surgeon is against Faith

Dr. Viggo Olsen, a well-known surgeon, encountered Blaise Pascal's statements. He and his wife fought tooth and nail against the Christian faith. Together, they searched for all the arguments they could find and step by step they drifted into an unparalleled adventure. Dr. Olsen tells the story in his book: "The agnostic who dared to search."

What brought about a turning point?

They found a living faith in Jesus Christ by reading the Bible. **Blaise Pascal's theory of probability and its application to the claim to truth of the biblical-Christian faith was also a crucial help. The so-called "Pascal's bet".**

(Note: It has to do with the foundation of the Christian faith according to the Bible and not with church traditions.)

Pascal: The better choice

The surgeon relates: "Blaise Pascal dealt in-depth with the same choice that we have to make today."

He came to the conclusion that every sensible, thinking person had to make a decision for Jesus Christ, even when the chances of the Christian teachings being accurate were only 50:50. Here is his explanation:

Pascal's pointed thought makes it clear what Jesus Christ said much earlier:

"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"

The Bible says: *"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."* (Matthew 16:26; 1 John 5:12 NKJV)

Everyone has to bet

In the game of life everyone has to place a bet. There is a stake for every bet. Each person has to either bet his life on the claim that the Christian teaching is true or on the claim that it isn't true. When a person doesn't place a bet, then he has automatically placed a bet on the possibility that it isn't true.

First Possibility

Let's assume that a person chooses the biblical-Christian faith: If his assumption is correct, then he has gained everything. If his assumption is incorrect, then he has nothing to lose.

Second Possibility

Let's assume that a person decides AGAINST the Christian faith: If his assumption is correct, then he has gained nothing. If his assumption is incorrect, then he has lost everything.

Further Considerations

Dr. Olsen said about himself: "Since I used to be a passionate gambler, I was able to follow Pascal's arguments. I said to my wife that his argument is based on a simple 50:50 chance that the Christian faith is right. However, Pascal doesn't even take into consideration the countless evidence for the truth of the Christian teaching. Later, we discovered that Pascal did mention the search for proof after all."

Later, I will make a brief reference to evidence. Proof on one side or the other can be a great help to us in making the right and best decision.

The principle of probability shows that it is important to make the effort to find the truth. Because this effort will be richly rewarded.

Dr. Olsen continued: "During this time, I had a clear insight with regards to faith. I saw that millions of people call themselves Christians. But in reality, they aren't true Christians, because their faith has become dull and diseased." "Let's assume", I said to my wife, "that two patients are suffering from the same fatal disease. Both of them think I am a skillful doctor. They both believe my diagnosis is correct. They also believe that the shots I prescribed will save them from dying. One of them gets the shot and survives. The other, despite his trust in me and my treatment, has an illogical fear of shots and thus refuses it. He dies."

What is the difference?

Both patients believed, both believed on the healing power of the medicine.

But belief that doesn't take possession, that isn't expressed in actions, isn't enough.

Consider what we can win:

- › Forgiveness of our guilt by grace without merit.
- › A loving relationship with God.
- › A changed life with different wishes and goals.
- › A new inner strength for life.
- › Joyful eternal life in a completely different dimension.
- › We won't be annihilated for eternity. (According to the Bible there is no eternal torment in hell.)

Are there decision-making aids?

Getting to know the evidence:

Prophecies: The Bible is the only book that contains exact predictions for long periods of time. There are hundreds of fulfilled prophecies, which we can verify. They show clearly that the Bible is of divine origin, since humans have no such foreknowledge.

The Bible itself is a miracle: This book about God's way of salvation was written over a period of 1,600 years by 40 men and contains 66 books. The miracle is that the contents all agree.

Archeological findings: The archeological finds have revealed an abundance of facts. Archeology confirms the Bible.

Changed lives: Every individual can experience the power of God in his own life. He can have the assurance that his sins are forgiven. He can be certain of his own resurrection and eternal life. Every person can lead a life full of significance and meaning through Christ.

I think it is good, if we don't make any emotional decisions, but rather weigh the evidence.

Getting to Know the Bible:

Reading the Bible: It is important that we get to know the Bible ourselves. I recommend reading the New Testament first, since it is historically closer to our times and gives us insights into Jesus' life here on earth. Afterwards, it is good to read the Old Testament. We should always pray before reading the Bible and should ask God to help us understand what we read.

Bible Correspondence Course: There are good free Bible lesson courses for beginners and advanced people, which can help us to get to know the Bible. These courses can be done alone or together with someone else.

Bible Discussion Group: This is a good opportunity to discuss the Bible in a small familial setting. Today, it is also possible to take part in Bible discussions online, i.e. Skype.

Bible Lectures: This is also a good possibility to gain basic understanding of God's word.

Doubters: People, who have honest questions, can get help so that they can make a good decision. One possibility is to pray in the following sense:

“Great God, is You really exist,
then please help me to perceive
You.”

Prayer

The exact wording doesn't matter, but rather that we are sincere. Jesus said that anyone who is willing to do God's will, will be bestowed with understanding (John 7:17). However, a person who deliberately doubts can't be helped by anyone – neither by God nor by people.

Rational human beings occupy themselves increasingly with the Bible. But they make a minor difference. A moderator said it like this: “I don't have anything against God, but I do have a lot against His 'ground crew'.”

Many reckon that there must be something about God. They ask: Could I thereby find the meaning of life?

You have everything to win or everything to lose. It is your decision. The bet counts ...

With warm greetings,

Helmut

Hilfreich war „Kann man Gott entfliehen“ von Dr. Viggo Olsen, Schulte-Verlag 1973 mit Genehmigung Gerth-Verlag.

Further Letters to Andrew, which feature evidence in favor of God’s existence and the Bible:

Letter to Andrew 6: What does the future hold?

- › The shortest world history was written 2,600 years ago. It shows us “what will be in the latter days”.
- › Of the six predictions, five have already been fulfilled.
- › Will Europe achieve political unity? What is still to come?

Letter to Andrew 7: Prevention or healing?

- › From whom does the science of preventive medicine stem?
- › Who helped to save millions of people’s lives?

Letter to Andrew 8: Prophecies about Jesus Christ

- › Probability of fulfillment $1:10^{17}$ according to human criteria
- › But the prophecies were precisely fulfilled and strengthen our faith.

Letter to Andrew 9: Prophecies about four cities

- › Which were literally fulfilled although the mathematical probability is 1:200 trillion.
 - The Golden Gate of Jerusalem
 - The strange rock city of Petra
 - The legendary Babylon
 - The rise and fall of Tyre

Christian Faith put to the Test



Everything hinges on honestly answering three questions.

*Dear Andrew,**

I am happy that you want to establish clarity about God, Jesus Christ and the Bible. I will gladly attempt to help by drawing your attention to a few fundamental facts.

Today, the youth and thinking people are occupying themselves more and more with the Bible. But they make one fine distinction. A moderator put it like this: "I don't have anything against God, but I do have a lot against His 'ground crew' – the church."

Today, many sense that there must be something about God after all. They ask: Could they find deeper meaning and purpose in life with Him? Contemporary people want to know the facts. They want to know what it will profit them. And I have to say: They are right.

The Christian faith hinges on honestly answer three questions: God, Jesus, Bible!

- 1. Does a living, all-knowing and all-powerful God exist, who loves humans?**
- 2. Is Jesus of Nazareth really the Redeemer sent by God?**
- 3. Was the Bible or Holy Scriptures really written by people under God's authority or is it merely a human product?**

There are very satisfactory answers to these fundamental questions.

I want to show you a way you can find the answers for yourself. It is better if you convince yourself than if I try to do that. Maybe you aren't acquainted yet with the method I am referring to.

The Bible contains many predictions. They are called prophecies. Hundreds of them have been fulfilled. We can acquaint ourselves with them and verify them. I am sure that you are

acquainted with some of them. But maybe I can show you a new aspect now.

One group of predictions is called “messianic prophecies”, which refer to the first coming of Jesus about 2,000 years ago. “Messiah” comes from Hebrew. We are more familiar with the Greek form: “Christus”. Translated it means: savior, redeemer, anointed, rescuer. This group of prophecies contains 333 details. We can discover them easily.

But what does this have to do with the answers to our three great questions? You will understand in a moment.

The apostle Peter said in the Bible in 2 Peter 1:21 (NIV):

“... prophets ... spoke from God.”

To translate Peter: The Bible is based on divine revelation. If this is so, then Christian faith is from God, provided that it conforms with the Bible.

But how can we ascertain for ourselves if the Christian faith is from God?

Verify what the apostle Peter said. But how can you do that?

Compare the predictions of the prophets with events that took place later. The correlations show you that the predictions were true. At the same time, does it mean that the prophets got their information from God?

Exactly that is the crucial point.

No human can know things beforehand. We don't know what will happen tomorrow. Naturally, we can guess what will happen tomorrow. We also know what we want to do. Let's take the weather forecast as an example. Is this knowing something beforehand? No, it is a calculation of what the weather will be based on current factors. Because these factors are variable, the forecast is not always correct.

The predictions about Jesus were made by multiple prophets between 400 and 1,500 years before He came. These predictions contain precise details, which were exactly fulfilled. No human has such abilities – neither then nor today. But there is **SOMEONE**, who knows everything exactly beforehand. The Bible calls this someone **GOD**.

Think about our elections! Even on the morning of the elections no one knows beforehand

who is going to win. The projections are only a conclusion from a poll of certain people. These people are asked who they will vote for and then conclusions are drawn. This is a calculation, not a prediction.

God said through the prophet Isaiah in the Bible in chapter 46, verses 9 and 10:

“Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’”



The prophecies are the divine validation of the Bible. NO ONE CAN IMITATE THAT.

If you should find a book with similar prophecies to the ones in the Bible about Jesus Christ, which were given centuries before in detail, then you can get US \$ 5,000 from an American. As of yet, no one has found such a book.

These facts cannot be counterfeited by anyone, because science has since produced an abundance of evidence for this.

The further the sciences get, the more powerful the divinity of the prophecies and the Bible emerges. WHAT DOES THIS SHOW US?

1. There is someone who knows the future in every detail centuries beforehand. He is all-knowing. What He reveals, happens. Nobody can change it. This ONE is all-powerful. He has revealed Himself to us, because He loves us. You can also personally experience this.
2. The Bible writers were, however well meaning, incapable of making these predictions through contemplation or coincidence. Hence, the Bible can only be from God. There is no other possibility.
3. Every person can be distinguished from others through certain features. A letter from Japan reaches you, when the country, town, street, house number and your name are specified. The 333 details in the prophecies about Christ imply that God has endowed Jesus with as many features. Among all people these features apply to only one being – Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, we know that only He is the Redeemer sent by God.

First example:

In the Bible, in the Old Testament, from the prophet Micah, chapter 5, verse 2 (NKJV) it says:

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

The prophet Micah lived about 700 years before Christ. He indicates that a little-known village will be the birthplace. This prophecy was clearly understood. We can read about the fulfillment in the New Testament in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 2, verses 3-6 (NKJV):

“... Herod ... inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ‘But you, Bethlehem ... for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

A birthplace is indisputable. A few questions about this prophecy: Did Micah just make a good guess? Was the exact fulfillment 700 years later just a coincidence? Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth. They had to go to Bethlehem. Back then it would have been a four-day trip with a donkey or by foot. Why this great exertion just before having a baby? Caesar Augustus had commanded a census be taken.

Everyone had to go to the place of the origin of their lineage. This should have taken place earlier. But the Jews didn't want this census. They had sent a delegation to Rome. The emperor dismissed their objections. Hence, the census was delayed. The famous British chemist and archeologist, Sir William Ramsay, discovered a Roman inscription in 1923, which mentions this measure. Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem at exactly the right moment for Jesus' birth. A precise fulfillment.

This isn't something a person can guess. Also, a person can't know something like this 700 years beforehand. How did Micah know this? There is only one possibility:

“... prophets ... spoke from God.”

Micah knew it from an all-knowing God. Can you think of another possibility? Can you prophesy where the man (or woman) will be born, who will govern Germany in 700 years? (... if the world still exists.) Do you know of anyone else, who can give this kind of information, which will really come to pass? That was only one example. You can find many more yourself. When you read the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) in the New Testament, then you will frequently find similar expressions to the one in Matthew 2, verse 5:

“... for thus it is written by the prophet.”

Many Bibles also include a reference to the text in the Old Testament where the prophecy is. Bible translators added these so that we can more easily find the connections. Remember:

The only person to ever have their
life story written beforehand
is Jesus Christ.

The messianic prophecies are always in the Old Testament and it was already completed 400 years before Christ. This means that all these prophecies were made at least 400 years beforehand. Under these circumstances, I think that it isn't important to know that Micah lived approximately 700 years before Christ, David about 1000 years before Christ, etc.

Since the New Testament was written after Jesus lived on this earth, you will find all the fulfillments of the prophecies there. If you don't have much time, then read at least the gospel of Matthew, which contains the most examples.

Here is a list of some more prophecies about Jesus:

- › He would come from the tribe of Judah.
- › He would be a descendant of David.
- › A herald would announce his coming.
- › He would die by crucifixion.
- › Lots would be cast for His clothes and then divided.
- › His bones would not be broken.
- › His side would be pierced.
- › His substitutionary death.

Every detail was fulfilled in His life, death and resurrection.

These are only a few of the 333 prophesied details.

He was the greatest man to ever walk this earth.

Dr. Olinthus Gregory said that if only 50 prophecies had "coincidentally" been fulfilled (instead of hundreds), then this "coincidence" would be 1:1 trillion 125 billion. In numbers: 1:1,125,000,000,000,000

Whoever knows this, will never again speak of a coincidental fulfillment of biblical prophecies. Peter said:

"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed ..." (2 Peter 1:19) NKJV

F. J. Meldau, who studied all of the messianic prophecies, said:

"A person is truly blind if they can't or don't want to see that the eternal Spirit planned all these details and the hand of the Omnipotent accomplished His perfect plan."

The all-knowing God doesn't expect blind trust from us. He gave us good reasons to trust Him.

The opportunity to get to know prophecies, gives our faith a solid foundation to trust God, Jesus Christ and the Bible.

A summary for today:

1. There is a living, all-knowing and all-powerful God, who has revealed Himself among other ways through prophecies.
2. The Bible can only originate from God, since humans aren't capable of making prophecies like these in such detail centuries beforehand.
3. Jesus of Nazareth is the only one, who was verified through the unparalleled messianic prophecies as our Redeemer. We can and may trust Him completely.

Jesus Himself spoke about the purpose of prophecies:

“And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.”
(John 14:29 NKJV)

I am glad that you will think about these fundamental questions of biblical/Christian faith.

With warm greetings,

Helmut

May I recommend some other Letters to Andrew about prophecies to you?

Letter to Andrew 6: What does the future hold?

- › The shortest world history was written 2,600 years ago. It shows us “what will be in the latter days”.
- › Of the six predictions, five have already been fulfilled.
- › Will Europe achieve political unity? What is still to come?

Letter to Andrew 8: Prophecies about Jesus Christ

- › Probability of fulfillment 1:10¹⁷
- › About the clothes of the crucified One: partially dividing them and partially lots were cast for them.
- › None of His bones were broken. The Roman soldiers ignored the command and did what had been foretold, without knowing it.
- › Betrayal for 30 pieces of silver along with eight other details.

Letter to Andrew 9: Prophecies about four cities

- › which were literally fulfilled although the mathematical probability is 1:200 trillion.
 - The Golden Gate of Jerusalem
 - The strange rock city of Petra
 - The legendary Babylon
 - The rise and fall of Tyre.

Prophecies about Jesus Christ

Probability of Fulfillment $1:10^{17}$

*Dear Andrew!**

Today, I am writing to you about **three** remarkable prophecies. At the end, I will go into greater detail about the probability for **eight** messianic prophecies, according to human wisdom, being $1:10^{17}$.

1. About the clothes of the crucified One: partially divided and partially lots were cast for it.
2. No bone would be broken. The Roman soldiers ignored the command and did what was foretold in the prophecies, without knowing it.
3. Betrayal for 30 pieces of silver – with 8 details.

The Prophecy about the Clothing of the Crucified One

King David of Israel, who was also a prophet, said in God's name about a 1000 years before Christ what they would do with the clothes of the crucified:

Prophecy:

"They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." (Psalm 22:18 NKJV)

How was this prophecy fulfilled a 1000 years later? The apostle John tells about it in John 19:23-24 NKJV:

Fulfillment:

"Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which

says: *‘They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.’ Therefore the soldiers did these things.”*

Remarkable details are related here. Jesus’ clothes were supposed to be dealt with in various manners:

1. they divide my garments among them
2. they cast lots for my clothing

There was a sentinel of four guards beneath the cross. They divided Jesus’ clothing amongst themselves. Each of them got a piece. But one piece remained: the outer garment. They wanted to divide it into four parts, so that each person got a piece. But they noticed that it was woven out of one piece of cloth. That was valuable. The soldiers thought that if they cut it up, each person would only have a piece of cloth. Its real value would be destroyed. And so they said: “It is better is one person gets the outer garment, rather than just a piece of cloth.” How did they solve this problem? They cast lots. It happened just like it had been prophesied a thousand years beforehand.

Observe the exact fulfillment
of the biblical prediction.

The number of soldiers beneath the
cross was the same as the number
of pieces of clothing Jesus had.
Only one was left over.

And the soldiers divided up the pieces
in just the way that it was foretold.

Could we foretell a thousand years beforehand what would happen to a certain person? Would we know how many pieces of clothing he would be wearing? And how many soldiers would be there? David couldn’t have possessed this knowledge himself. There is only one possibility: God revealed it to him.

The prophecy that no bone would be broken of the crucified one

The first reference was given by Moses about 1,300 years beforehand.

First Prophecy:

*“In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, **nor shall you break one of its bones.**”* (2. Mose (Exodus) 12,46)

This text is talking about the institution of the Passover feast just before the exodus from Egypt. It is referring to the Passover lamb. This lamb was a symbol for the coming redeemer. Remember that when Jesus came to John the Baptist to be baptized by immersion in the Jordan, that John said:

“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29 NKJV)

Second Prophecy:

The next reference in this context was given by King David about 300 years later. This was still a 1000 years before it was fulfilled.

David was acquainted with the writings of Moses. But he said that what Moses said about the lamb was about a person, a righteous person:

“He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken.” (Psalm 34:20 NKJV)

Fulfillment:

“Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.” (John 19:31-33 NKJV)

The preparation day, which is mentioned here, is the day before Sabbath (Saturday) – so Friday. It is called the preparation day in the Bible, because the preparations for the Sabbath were made on this day. In this case, it is the day we call Good Friday today. It is the day that Jesus was crucified.

The Jews requested something from Pilate. The people that were crucified shouldn't hang on the crosses on the Sabbath. That is why they asked for their legs to be broken so that they would die more quickly.

Pilate granted their request. This contradicted what the Bible had prophesied: Not one of His bones would be broken.

Assuming that you had been in Jerusalem on this occasion and had known about the prophecy, would you have cared a straw if it was fulfilled? The Roman soldiers were ordered to break the legs. They started their job. First, they broke the legs of one of the men that had been crucified and then the legs of the one on the other side of Jesus. It was odd that they went around Jesus. Were they maybe hesitant? Did they have a hunch who Jesus was?

When they came to Jesus, they found that He was already dead. Hence, the execution of the command became redundant. And so contrary to the order, Jesus' thighbones were not broken. Why? What had God said through David a thousand years beforehand and through Moses over 1300 years beforehand?

“He [God] guards all his bones; not one of them is broken.” (Psalm 34:20 NKJV)

This prophecy was precisely fulfilled. But now comes something surprising. The soldiers did something without any orders. And what they did without any orders was prophesied about 500 years beforehand by the prophet Zechariah. Let's read further in John 19:34-37:

Third Prophecy:

“But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen [this was the disciple John] has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, ‘Not one of His bones shall be broken.’ (Exodus 12:46) And again another Scripture says, ‘They shall look on Him whom they pierced. (Zechariah 12:10)”

Without an order, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus in the side to make sure He was really dead. The soldiers determined that He was dead, because the blood had already decomposed.

Bear in mind was happened here:

Three prophets made predictions, which were fulfilled to the letter. Moses 1,300 years beforehand, David 1,000 beforehand and Zechariah 500 years beforehand. These three men, who were separated by centuries and didn't know each other, made congruent predictions.

How did they know that? Was it a probability calculation? Was it a coincidence? There is only one reasonable conclusion: The revelations that they received all came from the same source. And this One was always there throughout these centuries. God is from everlasting to everlasting. He revealed it to them. There is no other conclusion.

Prophecy: Christ would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

First Prophecy:

“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.” (Prophesied by David about 1,000 years beforehand in Psalm 41:9 NKJV)

The following prophecy was made by the prophet Zechariah about 500 years before it was fulfilled. It is found in Zechariah 11:12-13.

Second Prophecy:

“Then I said to them, ‘If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.’ So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me, ‘Throw it to the potter’ – that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.”

It is reported in Matthew 10:4 and Matthew 27:1-10 what took place 1,000 or 500 years later.

Fulfillment:

“... Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.”
“When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, ‘I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.’ And they said, ‘What is that to us? You see to it!’ Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, ‘It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.’ And they consulted together and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, ‘And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord directed me.’”

All eight details were fulfilled, although it was impossible from a human perspective:

1. Christ would be betrayed.
2. He would be betrayed by a friend.
3. The traitor’s wages would be 30 pieces of silver.
4. The “princely price” was the price for a foreign slave.
5. The money pieces were of silver.
6. They would be thrown, not laid down somewhere or given to someone.
7. The place they would be thrown would be the temple.
8. The money wouldn’t be left there, but rather would be given to a craftsman (to buy a field).

There were so many possibilities by every single point. God in His omniscience knew thousands of years beforehand what would happen. He foretold these things so that we could see His hand in the fulfillment and our trust in Him would be strengthened.

Professor Stoner's Results

The scientist, Peter Stoner, looks at eight messianic prophecies in his book *Science Speaks* and shows “that according to mathematical probability calculations a coincidence is impossible”. He says: “... we can therefore see that the chance of eight prophecies being fulfilled about a random person (from then till now) is $1:10^{17}$.” That is a one with 17 zeros = 1:100,000,000,000,000,000.

(Die Bibel im Test, Josh McDowell, CLV 2002, Seite 250-1)

Stoner continues: “These prophecies were either given through God’s inspiration or the prophets wrote them at their own discretion. In such a case, the prophets would have only had one chance in $1:10^{17}$, that all these things would be fulfilled with one person; but they were all fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

This means that the fulfillment alone of these eight prophecies proves that God with certainty inspired the writings of these prophets, which misses absoluteness with only a chance in $1:10^{17}$.”

Stones then takes into account 48 prophecies and says: “...we see that the chance of fulfillment of all 48 prophecies with one person comes to $1:10^{157}$.”

I am so glad that you are so interested in studying proof of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

With warm greetings,

Helmut

Further Letters to Andrew about prophecies. You will enjoy learning about them.

Letter to Andrew 1: Christian faith put to the test

› Everything hinges on answering three questions.

Letter to Andrew 6: What does the future hold?

› The shortest world history was written 2,600 years ago.

It shows us “what will be in the latter days”.

› Of the six predictions, five have already been fulfilled.

› Will Europe achieve political unity? What is still to come?

Letter to Andrew 9: Prophecies about four cities

› Which were literally fulfilled although the mathematical probability is 1:200 trillion.

– The Golden Gate of Jerusalem

– The legendary Babylon

– The strange rock city of Petra

– The rise and fall of Tyre.



*Dear Andrew,**

Today, I am writing to you about Jesus. Naturally you know His name. Everyone knows it. But I am sure you would be interested in getting to know Jesus better. Everyone acquainted with His life's circumstances, confirm that He is the greatest figure that ever lived. Why is this?

Jesus was born in an unknown village by a hitherto unknown woman. He grew up in a different village. Already at 12 years of age He was able to hold His own with the greatest teachers and thinkers of His time. Nevertheless, He worked until 30 years of age as a carpenter. After that He traveled around Israel as an itinerant preacher for 3 ½ years.

What impact did Jesus' life have?

Phillips Brooks said: "I am not mistaken when I say all of the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one solitary life – the life of Jesus Christ."

William Edward Hartpole Lecky, an unbelieving, outstanding historian said: "The character of Jesus has not only been the highest pattern of virtue, but the longest incentive in its practice, and has exerted so deep an influence, that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."

- › Jesus wasn't an author and yet more books have been written about Him than any other person.
- › He wasn't a historian and yet He became the central figure of history. The date on every newspaper and letter affirms this.

- › Jesus wasn't an artist and yet the greatest masterpieces of painters, sculptors and musicians have been devoted to Him.
- › Jesus wasn't a lawyer and yet His law of love is the best in the world.
- › Jesus wasn't a doctor and yet He was the greatest doctor, who could heal any disease.
- › Jesus wasn't a psychologist and yet everyone came to Him for advice. An eminent psychologist said: *"If we were to burn all the straw among the psychological works, then what was left wouldn't be nearly enough to come close to the Sermon on the Mount."*
- › Jesus wasn't married, nevertheless no one can give better advice on how to have a happy marriage than He can.

Why is Jesus and His successful life so unique? Why isn't there anyone with whom He could be compared?

A Christian would answer without hesitation: Because He was God, the Son of God, who became a human. It was an exciting fact for the disciples that God became human in Jesus Christ in order to save us just as the prophecies had said centuries beforehand. You certainly remember the unparalleled miracle of the messianic prophecies. God accredited Jesus of Nazareth with 333 identifiers. Interestingly

enough not a single false messiah has ever dared to lay claim to these prophecies.

It was prophesied that Christ is *"God with us"* (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23), that He, who was born in Bethlehem, is *"from everlasting"* (Micah 5:2), and that He would be called: *"Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"* (Isaiah 9:6).

Who did Jesus say that He was?

He confirmed that He was the Christ, who the prophecies had heralded (Matthew 11:1-6; Matthew 16:16-17; Luke 4:17-21; John 4:25-26 i. a.).

Jesus was asked under oath at His interrogation before the Sanhedrin:

"Tell us if you are the Christ, the son of God!" (Matthew 26:63-64 NKJV). Jesus answered: *"It is as you said."*

The Jews clearly understood Jesus' claim to be the matchless Son of God. Because they charged Him that as a human, He was making Himself into God (John 10:33).

He said: *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."* (Matthew 28:18 NKJV) and *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,"* says the Lord, *"who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."* (Revelation 1:8 NKJV)

What did eyewitnesses say about Jesus?

John Montgomery, historian, said: “What, then, does a historian know about Jesus Christ? He knows, first and foremost, that the New Testament documents can be relied upon to give an accurate portrait of Him.” – What do the eyewitnesses report there?

Johannes der Täufer testified that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God (John 1:34). According to John, Jesus was supposed to take away the sins of the world, something that only God can do (John 1:29).

Petrus declared that Jesus the Christ is the Son of the living God (John 6:68).

Martha, Lazarus’ sister, testified the same thing (John 11:27).

Thomas, was reluctant at first to acknowledge the fact of Christ’s resurrection, but ultimately when he stood before the living Christ: “... said to Him, *My Lord and my God!*” (John 20:28 NKJV)

The apostle John testified of Jesus’ divinity with the following words: “*This is the true God and eternal life.*” (1 John 5:20 NKJV) He calls our attention to the fact that the biblical reports have the following objective: “... but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:31 NKJV)

The Roman centurion, who was in charge of the soldiers at Jesus’ crucifixion, also testified of Jesus’ divinity. He said:

“*Truly this was the Son of God!*” (Matthew 27:54 NKJV)

Paul rebelled at first with all his might against Christ. He did everything he could to kill the followers of Jesus. But after his personal encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, he became a zealous disciple of Jesus and declared about Christ: “... *who is over all, the eternally blessed God.*” (Romans 9:5 NKJV) He testified of Him: “*For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*” By that he means that Christ possesses all of the divine traits in full measure.

What does history say about Jesus?

Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian observed: “About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who performed surprising deeds and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. ... He was the Christ.

And when, upon the accusation of the principal men among us, Pilate had condemned him to a cross, those who had first come to love him did not cease. He appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for the prophets of God had foretold these things and a thousand other marvels about him.”

Cornelius Tacitus mentioned: “Christus, the founder of the name, had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilatus ...”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe recognized that: “If ever divinity appeared on this earth, then it was in the person Jesus.”

J.-J. Rousseau wrote: “If Socrates lived and died like a philosopher, Jesus lived and died like a god.”

Ernest Renan, the famous orientalist and critic, made a remarkable confession:

“No matter what the future may bring,
it will never surpass Jesus.”

What conclusions did genuine sceptics make, when they examined the facts?

General L. Wallace had an animated discussion with a well-known atheist about the absurdity of Christianity. Wallace decided to write a book to prove that Christianity was senseless and that Jesus Christ had never lived. For years he collected material for his book. He soon realized that Jesus Christ had really lived.

Then he came to the conclusion that Christ was more than a historical figure. When he was 50 years old, he knelt down and prayed for the first time in his life. He asked Christ to be his Lord and Savior. – With the material he had collected he then wrote the famous story Ben Hur.

Sir William Ramsay became famous for his research about antiquity. He was convinced that the Bible was unreliable. He was a chemist and archeologist and went to the orient to establish the truth. He remained there for 15 years. He returned as a devote Christian and wrote many books, which fostered the Christian faith and trust in the Bible.

Frank Morison, an English journalist, wanted to prove that Jesus’ resurrection was a myth. His research led him to the conclusion that he was dealing with facts. As a result, he became a devoted Christian.

Prof. Dr. Cyril M. Joad, dean of the philosophy faculty at the University of London, was also a sceptic, who was of the opinion that Jesus was only a human. He believed that there was no such thing as sin. But a dramatic change took place in his life. He now believed that sin was a reality. Two world wars had shown him that humans are sinners. He came to the realization that the only explanation for sin can be found in the word of God and that the only solution for sin was the cross of Christ. He became a diligent follower of Jesus.

Giovanni Papini, a famous Italian atheist, also became a devote Christian after he started to study the New Testament.

He even went on to write a book about the life of Jesus.

Adolf Deißmann, a great German researcher, went to the Orient to demonstrate the untrustworthiness of the Bible. Because of the facts, he also became a devoted Christian and theologian. His book, “Light from the Ancient East”, verifies the truthfulness of the Bible.

This list could be continued for quite a while with similar people, who couldn’t oppose the facts.

Prof. Josh McDowell – After the second World War he preached Christ for 27 years in more than 500 universities in 52 countries to more than 3.5 million academics and students. He wrote:

“I didn’t find a single person, insofar as they sincerely studied the evidence, who would have contested that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world. The evidence of Jesus’ divinity is overwhelming for every honest and unbiased seeker of truth.”

What do you think of the following thought? Assuming that we would meet someone, who knows nothing about the Christian faith and would ask him:

What would you expect from God, if He came to the earth as a human?

His answers could be as follows:

- › I would expect that God would be an exceptional type of person.
- › I would expect that as a human He would not do the slightest wrong.
- › I would expect that he would stand above the laws of nature and would perform miracles.
- › I would expect that He had a better character than everyone else.

- › I would expect that He would give the greatest teachings there ever were.
- › I would expect that He would exert an ongoing and universal influence.
- › I would expect that He could satisfy our deep desire for God.
- › I would expect that He had power over death.
- › I would expect that He would be able to help me when I asked Him.

Jesus met all these expectations in every detail.

What benefit is this all to me?

Since Jesus lives, He is able to have an influence over our lives if we want Him to. Saul, a fierce enemy, became the greatest Christian missionary. The fearful Simon became the courageous Peter; the hotheaded John became the apostle of love.

Yes, Christ gives us life in abundance, fulfillment, forgiveness and peace. Getting to know Jesus Christ personally is the greatest enrichment of your life. Because that is the heart of the gospel. Gospel means: “good news”, “glad tidings”. It is indeed the best news for you and me, because we both need Christ.

We will talk more about this next time. Wouldn’t you like to read more about Jesus in the gospels in the meantime?

Maybe you could read this letter together with some friends and discuss it or you could pass this letter on to someone else.

Siegfried Buchholz, a sales director, professed:

“Jesus is the most exceptional and fascinating person I have ever gotten to know.” (Hörzu)

I hope you also experience the joy of personally getting to know Jesus, the Son of God.

With warm greetings,

Helmut

Further Letters to Andrew about Jesus Christ:

Letter to Andrew 1: Christian faith put to the test

- › Everything hinges on answering three questions.

Letter to Andrew 3: What is the main focus of the Bible?

- › 98 % have a false perception about what the Bible wants and what the heart of its message is.

Letter to Andrew 8: Prophecies about Jesus Christ

- › Probability of fulfillment 1:10¹⁷
- › About the clothes of the crucified One: partially dividing them and partially lots were cast for them.
- › None of His bones were broken. The Roman soldiers ignored the command and did what had been foretold, without knowing it.
- › Betrayal for 30 pieces of silver along with eight other details.



What is the Bible's main objective?

The Bible is the most significant and most widely read book in the world literature.

98% of the people have a mistaken perception of what the Bible wants and what its core messages is.

*Dear Andrew,**

Interest in the Bible is growing. In the past year 561 million biblical writings were distributed worldwide. In German-speaking countries about 8 million people read often or regularly in the Bible.

Today, I am writing about the main objective of the Bible. Dr. James Kennedy estimates that 98% have a mistaken perception of the Bible's main objective. That is why I am writing to you about this in detail. Then, you can explain it more easily to others.

The Bible's main objective is to give us an answer to the question:

How can a person receive new, eternal life?

Jesus Christus said: *"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* (John 10:10 NKJV)

Many have the desire to get something from life. However, Jesus Christ wants to not only give us something from life, but also a rich and fulfilled life. This life has to do with love, joy, freedom, security and sure hope.

This new life has positive effects on scholastics, career, friendship, marriage, family, health and our future. And this new life according to God's will be carried on in a completely new dimension for all eternity.

Buy a paperback book in a Christian bookstore with testimonials from people, who have found a new life with Christ. Personally, I am very glad that I have this new life.

On what basis does God give a new life?

We can find the answer in the “gospel”, which means “good news” or “glad tidings”. You will quickly realize why this message makes you happy. It is the best news people have ever heard.

Imagine that you would die today and you would have to give God an answer to the following question: “Why do you expect eternal life from Me?” What would you answer? Frequent answers are:

- Because I kept the commandments ...
- Because I did good ...
- Because I led a respectable life ...

Many think that if they do this or that, then they will receive eternal life in return. I recommend every person to keep God’s commandments, to do good and to lead a respectable life. But the idea of receiving new life in return is totally wrong. The Bible teaches the opposite: A new life is a gift of love from God. There is no way that we can earn a new life. Not even by suffering. When I realized this, I was very happy. I will tell you why a little later – also about what importance good works have.

Some may ask: Is doing good in vain then? By no means. God values every good deed. But we can’t earn eternal life with them. God gives new life to those who trust Him on the basis of Jesus’ sacrifice.

A sacrificial death for someone else can only happen out of love. Love can be reciprocated, but it can’t be earned.

Thankfully, we can’t earn a new life.

Otherwise the rich, powerful, intelligent and healthy would be favored. Others would have a disadvantage. Furthermore, we would live in constant fear whether we had done enough or if our deeds had been solely done out of pure and good motives. Even if we were able from now on to balance the “scale”, then the question would still remain about our past.

If we had to earn eternal life and took it really seriously, then we would end up with a nervous breakdown or in despair. There was someone who took it very seriously. He broke down in the process. You know him.

It was the then Augustinian monk Martin Luther. The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV:

“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.”

How much do you have to pay for receiving a gift? Isn’t it an insult to want to pay for a gift? I once asked the children in my religion class how much they had paid for the Christmas gifts they had received. One child answered: “We didn’t need to pay anything, but we thanked our parents for them.”

We should do the same with God’s gift: Accept it and express our thanks by the way we live. Have you thought enough about God’s splendid gift of love and goodness?

Why do we need a new life?

Because we lost the original life through sin. What is sin? At the deepest level it is indifference towards or rebellion against God. According to God's diagnosis, who has sinned? Everyone – including you and me:

“There is none righteous, no, not one. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:10,23 NKJV)

However, today many people don't consider themselves sinners.

I remember a conversation I had with a young businessman. He permitted me to ask him a few questions. Amongst other questions, I asked him if he was a sinner. He laughed out loud: “No, I take care of my family. I do my job at the company. I don't smoke or drink.”

He permitted me to ask him another question: “Have you ever committed adultery?” “Yes, I have.” He didn't consider himself a sinner. He was just deceiving himself. He was using the head-in-the-sand policy.

The secretary of a Christian director was convinced that she wasn't a sinner.

He asked her once: “Could it be that you think, say or do something wrong once a day?” The young woman answered in the affirmative after thinking for a few moments. The director continued: “Could it even be that you think, say or do something wrong two or three times a day?”

Her answer: “It definitely happens three times a day.” Her boss calculated for her: “Three sins a day makes a good 1,000 sins a year. If we don't count the first ten years of your life, then you already have 15,000 sins.” An unusual calculation.

What consequences does sin have?

The Bible says: *“But your iniquities have separated you from your God.”* (Isaiah 59:2 NKJV) And *“... the wages of sin is death.”* (Romans 6:23 NKJV)

God's verdict for sin is the death sentence. We can even understand this. If death wasn't the consequence of sin, then sin would always continue to exist. If a world without selfishness, hate, war and misery should ever again exist, then sin has to be completely exterminated. The only way is death.

We are guilty and therefore condemned men. We can't save ourselves. However, if we look to God, then we have a justified hope.

What does the Bible say about God's character?

“God is love” and *“God is righteous.”* (1 John 4:8; Daniel 9:14 NKJV) Righteousness is a result of love. If God were to encourage wrong, then He would be neither loving nor righteous. In the human way of looking at things this leads to a problem. It is often difficult for us to reconcile love and righteousness. Was this possibly also a problem for God?

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16 NKJV)

In His great love God solved the problem with the sacrificial death of His Son for you and me. Due to His righteousness God has to condemn us, but due to His love He personally assumes the penalty for every person, who trusts Him.

Who is Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us?

The Bible shows us that Jesus Christ is God. The Son of God became a human in order to save us.

If Jesus had only been a human or an angel, then He couldn't have saved us. Only God could carry the sum of all the guilt.

Assuming that God had created an angel to die for us – provided that the problem could have been solved this way – wouldn't that somehow be cheap? Nothing less than the infinitely great sacrifice of the Son of God was able to express God's love to us humans.

Jesus Christ is the creator of the world (John 1:1-3,14; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2). Only the creator has the power to redeem us. Without creative power there is no resurrection to eternal life.

Jesus Christ is also the divine law-giver (1 Corinthians 10:4; James 4:12 + John 5:22). Only the law-giver could make a change by taking the punishment we deserved on Himself.

When we realize that God was ready to sacrifice Himself for us humans, then we begin to understand His great love. Christ became a mediator through whom God proved His infinite love for a sinful fallen world.

There was only one possibility: Either Christ sacrificed Himself for us or we would all be eternally lost. The Bible clearly states: Jesus carried our sins (1 Peter 2:22,24; Isaiah 53:4-6).

Why can Jesus Christ be my substitute?

It was also difficult for me to understand how someone else could carry my debt. However, there are a number of cases in history, where a substitute died for someone or took their punishment.

Reporters discovered before a trial that the judge and the defendant had been college friends. Hence, the courtroom was full of curious people. What would the judge do? The trial proceeded entirely correctly. The verdict was a large money fine. Since they knew ahead of time that the convicted man couldn't pay – it had to do with embezzlement – the court officer was waiting to lead him away.

After the judge laid aside his robe, he stood in front of his friend and said: “Do you still believe that I am your friend?” An angry glare was his answer. The judge continued: “I was your judge. As a judge I couldn’t do otherwise. As a judge I have to give a fair verdict. But now I want to show you that I am your friend.”

Before the eyes of his friend he wrote a check for the high amount to which he had just sentenced him. It was a great financial sacrifice for the judge. He held the check out to the condemned man. Shamefacedly, he hesitated to accept it. But finally, he gratefully and trustingly took the check from his friend, the judge. He was able to leave the courtroom as a free man together with his friend. The sentence wasn’t enforced. The penalty had been paid by someone else. When a debt has been paid, then there is nothing left to pay.

According to John 5:22 Jesus Christ is our judge. The judge of the earth will judge fairly. He loves you and wants to be your friend (Romans 5:10; John 15:14). Due to His love, He is willing to pay for you. He is able to do this because of His sacrifice. When you seek His friendship and thankfully and trustingly accept His offer, then He will also pay your debt and the sentence won’t be enforced. (John 5:24)

Then you can “go home” together with your friend as a free man (John 14:13).

How can Jesus become my friend?

By trusting Him, by **believing** Him.

What has to be done in order to receive new life?

A prison warden wanted to know:
“What must I do to be saved?”

The answer was:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and you will be saved”

(Acts 16:30-31 NKJV)

*The important thing is to believe
in Jesus Christ.*

What does “belief” actually mean?

Unfortunately, the meaning of “belief” is watered down today. The English word “belief” comes from West Germanic “galaubon”, meaning: “to hold dear, esteem, trust”. Because this is so important, I want to explain it further.

“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!” (James 2:19 NKJV) Let’s simply call this “**intellectual-belief**”.

Some people pray before an operation or in an emergency. Let’s call this “**emergency-belief**”. Intellectual-belief is good. Emergency-belief, which can help us have experiences with God’s love, is also good. Both are part of saving belief. But intellectual-belief and emergency-belief are still not saving belief.

Complete or saving belief, according to the biblical understanding, has to do with **me completely entrusting myself** to Jesus Christ.

Here is an illustration of true belief:

A doctor loves a young woman. He would like to marry her. The young lady is convinced that this man is a good person and an outstanding physician. (This is intellectual-belief.) She needs an appendix operation. In her time of need, she asks the doctor for help. (This is emergency-belief.)

The doctor is certainly glad about her good opinion of him. He will also gladly perform the surgery. Now, the young woman is his patient. But if that was all, then it would definitely not be enough for him. He loves her and want to marry her. When she responds to his affections, then there is a preliminary “yes” in their engagement, which is then followed by the ultimate “I do” during the wedding vows. At the moment she says “I do” to a life together, she has entrusted herself to him. (This is saving belief.)

A covenant with the living God

This is an illustration of our relationship with Jesus Christ. We hear about Him or read about Him and eventually we ask Him for help. Many stop here and remain patients of Jesus, instead of entering the best covenant there is: a personal love-relationship. His love, which we

get to know through the Bible or experiences with Him, leads us to trust Him more and more. We turn to Him in a personal prayer (this is the engagement). When we have gotten to know Him better and trust Him more, then we surrender our lives to Him. We are saying YES to the wedding (the wedding is equivalent to the biblical baptism).

The Bible compares the relationship to Christ with a marriage

At the moment the young woman said out of love and trust “I do” for life, she became his wife. Thus, we become close friends with Jesus or children of God at the moment we give Him a complete, committed “I do” for our life.

“He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5:12 NKJV)

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God ...” (John 1:12 NKJV)

From this moment on we have new life. When we remain in this relationship with God, then we will be resurrected at Jesus’ second coming to eternal life.

A marriage is a very good comparison for our relationship with God. The Bible uses this illustration, for example, in Ephesians 5:22-33.

The “I do” at the wedding changes a lot of things. Usually, the woman takes on the name of her husband. Both of them leave their parents’ home, move into a home together and then lead a life together. It is the same with Jesus Christ. When we say “I do” to Him, then we want to live with Him. We enjoy reading His love letter – the Bible –, we like to talk with Him – prayer –, we are glad that He has time for us every day – worship or quiet time –, and that He wants to spend a whole day with us every week – Sabbath and at church. We delight in shaping our lives with Him – mission or church work. And one day, we will be able to accept the greatest inheritance there is: eternal life in God’s kingdom.

What is with good works?

Now for a few words about good works. The fundamental error of 98% of the people is that they think the Bible teaches that we have to earn eternal life.

What importance do good works have?

Let’s read Ephesians 2:8-9 again and also verse 10 (NKJV): *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves (i.e. not through your merits); it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand (for which God prepared us beforehand) that we should walk in them.”*

We are not saved by good works, but by God’s grace – without any merits from us. From the moment we are saved through our trust in

Jesus Christ, we have a new relationship to Him. He has given us a new and changed life. He has prepared good works for us in this new life, so that we can perform them.

Now, we want to gladden Jesus by demonstrating our love and thankfulness. And He gives us strength for this new life. May I say it like this: **The good works aren’t a condition for our salvation, rather the fruit of our salvation.**

Let’s return to the example of a marriage.

A young lady won’t marry a young man just because he brings her flowers. But if they love each other, the flowers can be a sign of their love.

When a couple is married, then the husband gives his wife housekeeping money. Is this a good deed? The wife cooks for her husband and keeps his suits in good order. Are those good deeds?

No one would consider these good deeds, with which they are earning their marriage. They are already married. It is the natural result of their love relationship.

Let me summarize: **We receive new life when we enter a close trust-relationship with Jesus Christ.**

My own Experience

For years I believed in God and Jesus Christ. I believed everything the Bible taught. I acknowledged it all with my mind. I also prayed and frequently had answered prayers.

Then the day came, when I discovered that I hadn't committed myself to Jesus Christ yet.

This insight caused me to have an inner struggle all week. I feared a loss if I would commit my life to Jesus. Until I realized that Jesus Christ loves me with a divine love and that He had proven that by dying for me. Then I realized that complete surrender to Him isn't a risk, but rather a great benefit.

That same day I said "I do" to Him and consecrated my life to Him in a simple prayer. This changed my life in a positive way. I am enthusiastic about my God. Looking back, I only regret one thing: That I hadn't realized this earlier and done it earlier.

I am now happy when I can help someone find this new life through Jesus Christ.

An Important Step in a Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ

The following prayer is an opportunity to express your trust in God. It isn't a matter of using exactly this wording, rather that we honestly mean and want what we say to God.

"Father in heaven, I have come to realize that I have tried to control my own life and have separated myself from You. Forgive me my sin. Thank you that you have forgiven my sin because Christ died for me and has become my Redeemer. Lord Jesus, please take over the lordship of my life and change me, like You want me to be."

Prayer

Such a prayer of surrender to Jesus Christ can be compared with an engagement. After the engagement, the couple get to know each other better and better and learn to appreciate each other more.

Then the marriage follows. In this comparison the marriage is equivalent to biblical baptism.

With warm greetings,

Helmut

Helpfully was „New Testament Witnessing“ by Elden K. Walter.

Seize Life



Through a personal relationship with God

Dear Andrew,

Can I straight away ask you an extremely important question?

Assuming that you were to die today (heart attack?, accident?), would you have the assurance of eternal life with Jesus Christ? Don't remain in the dark! Facts will help you find an answer.

Whoever searches for a relationship with God, will make the discovery of a lifetime:

1. God loves me!

"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:9-10 NKJV) That is why God has a plan for me. *"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior." (John 3:16-17 NKJV)*

Jesus promises: "... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10 NKJV)

God offers me great things:

- › A meaningful and full life – now
- › Eternal life – later

Why isn't God's offer given much validity? What is the reason behind this painful reality?

2. We have separated ourselves from God!

From the beginning, humans were called to fellowship with God. They had a personal relationship with God. By their own free will, they separated themselves from God. They thought they could be independent this way. And so, the close relationship to God was lost.

The Bible calls this decision by human beings “sin”. It doesn’t matter whether it manifests itself as active rebellion or passive indifference towards God.

Sin separates us from God.

The Bible explains what sin is:

“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2 NKJV)

“Whoever sins is guilty of breaking God’s law, because sin is a breaking of the law.” (1 John 3:4 GNT)

“All wrongdoing is sin ...” (1 John 5:17 GNT)

Many realize that their life has no meaning. That is why they strive for a meaningful life. But how? Without God?

However, an honest and respectable life, ideas for bettering the world or religious achievements do not straddle the abyss between us and God. Sin, with all its consequences, is not eliminated with all these efforts. What is God’s answer to all these human efforts?

3. What is God’s answer to all these human efforts?

His death paid the price for my sins: *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”* (Isaiah 53:5 NKJV)

“Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.” (Romans 8:34 NKJV)

Jesus Himself said: *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* (John 14:6 NKJV)

God did for me, what I can’t do myself: He spanned the separating abyss between me and Him. This happened when the Son of God died on behalf of my sins.

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12 NKJV)

We can find a personal relationship with God through Jesus.

It’s not enough to know this fact. God is waiting for a reaction. It could look something like this:

4. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior

“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.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV)

Accepting Him means:

- › Living with Him in a personal relationship,
- › Faith and trust in Him.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.” (Revelation 3:20 NKJV)

Two possibilities:

My ego as the center of my life

My ego governs. The results are, for example, desire for admiration, doubt, insecurity, guilt, internal unrest, etc.



Jesus Christ as the center of my life

Jesus Christ leads me. The advantages are among other things: peace, certainty, forgiveness, love, new and eternal life.



My answer to the following questions is vital:

- › Which illustration portrays my life?
- › More the upper illustration or the lower illustration?
- › What do I want to look like?
- › Which illustration do you wish for in your future?
- › What could hinder me from accepting Christ in my life now?

How can I accept Christ in my life?

I can make a decision today, now, for Jesus Christ. It is so simple to speak with Jesus. The Bible calls this “**prayer**”. Your prayer could be something like this:

Suggested Prayer

“Lord Jesus Christ, I want to thank You that You died and rose again for me. I am a sinner, please forgive me. Please come into my life now. I can’t save myself. I can’t earn eternal life. That is why I trust You. Free me from the power of evil. Give me strength to follow You. I surrender myself to You with everything I have and am. I accept eternal life. I haven’t earned it; but I thank You for this gift. Amen.”

Can you say “yes” to this prayer?

I recommend that you carefully read this prayer through a second time. Is it consistent with your will? Remember: Your will is God’s landing place in your life.

I suggest that you pray the prayer aloud now.

Now, I have invited Jesus Christ into my life with this prayer. I trust that He will keep His promises in my life:

“I will never turn away anyone who comes to me.” (John 6:37 GNT)

“But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing.” (1 John 1:9 GNT)

God’s word gives me assurance:

“Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5:12 GNT)

5. My new life with Jesus Christ

I have now accepted Jesus Christ in my life. I want to continue on this path with Him. I take God’s promises in His word seriously.

My new life isn’t based on a feeling, rather on the facts in God’s word:

“Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come.” (2 Corinthians 5:17 GNT)

Some may expect an exhilarating feeling after this prayer.

An engineer said disappointedly:
“I have given Jesus Christ my word with this prayer of surrender. But I am missing the corresponding feelings.”

You have surrendered your life to Jesus Christ. Your prayer of surrender created a **new fact**, because God and His word are reliable. The following realization is important in this context: **Facts aren't dependent on our feelings.** Facts are completely valid without any feelings. They are independent from my feelings.

For example: Your birthday is on a certain day. But you have absolutely no birthday feelings! **The fact is:** your birthday is on this day – even when you don't have any birthday feelings.

You know the times table. For example: $2 \times 2 = 4$; or $4 \times 4 = 16$. **The times table is a fact** – you don't have to feel that. Feelings are inappropriate here. Feelings are not a gauge of facts!

The engineer was relieved when he realized: “I have said yes to Jesus Christ. I am now a Christian – even without the corresponding feelings. Unfortunately, my mother never explained this simple principle to me.”

What is new or has changed in my life?

1. Christ has entered my life (Revelation 3:20; Colossians 1:27).
2. Christ forgives my guilt (Colossians 1:14; 1 John 1:9).
3. I belong to God – I am His child (1 John 3:1).
4. My life now has deep meaning (John 10:10; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15,17).
5. Christ helps me to follow His instructions (John 14:15; 15:10-11).
6. I am preparing to make a covenant with Christ through baptism (Mark 16:16).
7. Christ gives me eternal life (1 John 5:12).

Jesus promises: *“I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.”* (John 10:10b GNT)

Life is growth, Stagnation is regression.

That is why:

- › I don't look at myself, but rather at Jesus Christ.
- › I rely on God's redemption, not on my fluctuating feelings.
- › I keep a close connection with my Lord.
- › I maintain a prayer life.
- › I read daily in the Bible – God's word.
- › I have regular fellowship with like-minded Christians.
- › I profess Jesus Christ in my surroundings.
- › I prepare for baptism.
- › I am looking forward to the second coming of my Lord.

You have started a new life with Jesus Christ. I am happy for you. I want to compare your decision with an engagement. An engagement takes place in private. A beautiful time follows the engagement. You get to know each other better, you learn to love and trust each other more and the new relationship becomes deeper. When the time comes that you want to belong to each other forever, then the wedding follows. A wedding with Christ is equivalent to biblical baptism.

“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned.”
(Mark 16:16 GNT)

Maybe you could read my letter through several times, because I have attempted to summarize the essence of our relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

How can I get to know Jesus Christ better?

The same way we get to know any person, who isn't present. By conversations (telephone calls). In this case, we call it “prayer”. By reading about them. It is highly recommended to read the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) in the New Testament of the Bible. They tell about the life of Jesus. It gives a good

overview. It can also be inspiring to make a 14-day test with the Bible (see Andrew's letter number 15). In addition, a topical Bible study is recommended – for in-depth insights. There are free Bible correspondence courses in any country.

Naturally, it is now a matter of enjoying and maintaining our new relationship of trust with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has given us a vital help for this purpose: life in God's strength. I am looking forward to sharing more about this in my next letter (Life in God's strength – how?) Jesus longs for an enduring and sincere relationship with you. He said: *“Abide in Me, and I in you.”* (John 15:4 NKJV)

Helmut and my friend Kurt

(Helmut Haubeil and Kurt Hasel)

The Way to eternal Life



Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where if you were to die right now you would know for certain that you would have eternal life?

God Wants You to know that you have Eternal Life.

“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:13)

Suppose you were to die, and when you meet God, He were to ask you, “Why should I give you eternal Life in Heaven,” What would you say?

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The real question is, “Can we earn or deserve eternal life and heaven by our obedience or good life?”

No! Eternal Life is a gift, no one pays for a gift.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith ... it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:9)

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

Assurance is impossible if we depend on our own performance.

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We can understand why this is true, when we recognize what the Bible tells us about man.

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“Sin is breaking God’s Law.” (1 John 3:4)

“For the wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23)

We are guilty and condemned to die. We cannot save ourselves.

But God is merciful. He does not want to destroy anyone. That is why He sent his Son Jesus Christ to save us.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”
(John 3:16)

God is just therefore He must destroy sin and sinners in order to establish harmony and peace in the universe.

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Jesus Was both God and Man at the same time.

“In the beginning was the Word. ... the Word was God ... The Word became flesh and Dwelt among us.” (John 1:1,14)

“He bore our sins in his body on the tree.” (1 Peter 2:24)

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

God made him to be guilty for our sins, so that when he died he paid the penalty for our sins in full and gives us his perfect life of obedience.

We receive this free gift of Eternal Life by receiving Jesus.

“He who has the son has life.” (1 John 5:12)

We receive Him by asking him to come into our lives.

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God. ... If we ask for anything ... we have what we have asked for.” (v. 13)

Faith is believing he will do what he said he would do.

Faith is more than simply believing about Jesus ... it is a commitment to Him, similar to a marriage commitment to be faithful to each other.

The new life in Christ

- ▶ **Forgiven:** *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”* (1 John 1:9)
- ▶ **A New Person:** *“He is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”* (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- ▶ **Sons and Daughters of God:** *“To all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God.”* (John 1:12)
- ▶ **Winning Life:** *“For sin shall not be your master.”* (Romans 6:14)
- ▶ **Eternal Life:** *“God has given us eternal life, this life is in his Son.”* (John 5:11)

Do you see what Jesus wants to do for you?

Do you want to receive the free gift of eternal life that Jesus left heaven and died on the cross to give you?

Remember:

- ▶ Salvation only comes by trusting in Christ alone.
- ▶ We accept Jesus as Lord and Master as well as our Saviour.
- ▶ Out of gratitude and love we seek to obey his will.
- ▶ We must be willing to turn from our past sinful lifestyle and live according to His plan for us.

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“I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”
(Revelation 3:20)

Would you like to open the door and invite Jesus in now?

The Covenant Prayer: Lord Jesus, I want you to come into my life right now. I am a sinner. I cannot save myself. I cannot be good enough to deserve eternal life in heaven. So now, I put my trust in you. I accept you as my personal Saviour. I believe you died for me. I receive you as Lord and Master over my life. Help me as I turn from my sins and follow you. I accept your gift of eternal life. I don't deserve it but I thank you for it. Amen

For Your Assurance

You have Eternal Life:

“I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.” (John 6:47)

Welcome to the Family of God:

“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12)

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18)

To assist you in your new life, write for free Bible study guides:

Life in God's Strength – How?



Dear Andrew!

I had to hold the funeral for a young doctor. I requested her Bible so that I could find some reference points in order to make the address more personal. I found a place, where she had written: “I want life in abundance!” She wanted exactly that which only Jesus can give us:

“... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10 NKJV)

Jesus wants us to experience this new life now and to continue this new life when He comes again as eternal life in God's kingdom.

The challenge now is how we can have the motivation and strength for a happy and enduring relationship in a life with Jesus.

A fitting comparison: A car without fuel. There are only two possibilities: to push the car or to get fuel. Only when the car has fuel, does it fulfill its purpose.

A Christian life
without power can be compared
to a car without fuel.

Hence: How can I live in the power of God? Jesus told His disciples:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you ...” (Acts 1:8 NKJV)

How does that work? Where can we find more detailed information? There is a singular Bible text, where the Lord Jesus lovingly and strongly encourages us to ask for the Holy Spirit. Here is the text:

Luke 11:9-13: *“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 [e] 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!”

Do you notice something? Jesus used the verb “ask” six times in this passage; then He substitutes the word “ask” two times and reinforces it with the word “seek” – an active verb – and then two more times with the verb “knock” – also an active verb. Doesn’t this distinctly show us that we should take action? The last “ask” is in the continuous tense in Greek. This means that we shouldn’t just ask *one time*, but rather continuously ask. Not only does Jesus emphasize the urgency of asking, but also expects us to continuously practice it. This shows us that Jesus is convicted that we are missing something crucial. He is clearly calling our attention to the fact that we need the Holy Spirit and we are dependent on Him.

Jesus shows us in a masterly manner – by frequently repeating the verbs and making comparisons – our greatest need: we should continuously ask for the Holy Spirit. This is exceptional. It has to do with God’s supreme gift – the gift which brings all the other gifts in its train. This is the crowning gift that Jesus gave His disciples and plain proof of His love.

Every day will be an adventure for us, when we are acquainted with the reality of a life filled with the Holy Spirit and we constantly commit ourselves to His leadership.

The Bible speaks about three different groups of people in relation to their relationship to God:

Ask yourself: Which group do I belong to? And – what group do I want to belong to?

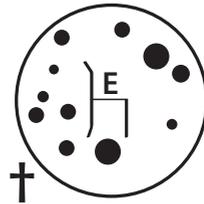
1. The Natural Person

This is a person, who hasn’t accepted Christ yet.

“The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 2:14 NIV)

A life ruled by the ego

- E = Ego, limited self on the throne.
- † = Christ outside of their life.
- = Areas of life, which are controlled by the ego and often lead to discord and disappointment.



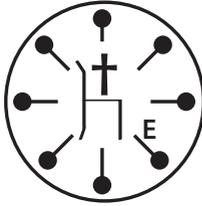
2. The Spiritual Person

This is a person, who has accepted Christ and is led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

“But he who is spiritual judges all things ...”
(1 Corinthians 2:15 NKJV)

A life led by Christ

- † = Christ is on the throne of life
- E = The ego is dethroned
- = Areas of life, which are under the leadership of the unlimited God and growing in harmony with God’s plan.



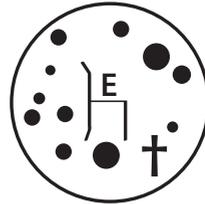
3. The Carnal Person

This is a person, who has accepted Christ, but often experiences defeats, because he tries to live a Christian life in his own strength instead of in the power of the Holy Spirit.

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NKJV)

A life controlled by the ego

- E = Ego, limited self on the throne
- † = Christ in their life, but not on the throne
- = Areas of life, which are controlled by the ego and often lead to discord and disappointment.



We want to look at this important matter in four steps. We will look more closely at the situation of the spiritual and carnal people.

1. God wants us to have a fulfilled and fruitful life.

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10 NKJV)

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5 NKJV)

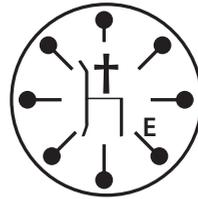
“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV)

“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 NKJV)

The Spiritual Person

Some traits that are characteristic of a life with God:

- Christ is the focal point
- Authority through the Holy Spirit
- An effective prayer life
- Understanding of God’s word
- Trust in God
- Obedience to God
- Lead other people to Christ



Love | Joy | Peace | Longsuffering
Kindness | Goodness | Faithfulness

The effects of these traits in our life depend on our maturity in Christ, on the degree of our connection with Him and also if we completely trust Him with all areas of our life.

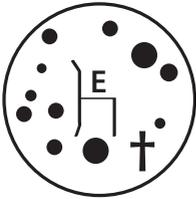
Someone, who is just starting to understand the work of the Holy Spirit, shouldn’t become discouraged when they don’t bear as much fruit as a mature Christian, who has long been acquainted with this truth.

Why do most Christians not experience this fulfilled life?

2. Carnal people can't experience a fulfilled and fruitful Christian life.

Some or all of the following traits characterize carnal Christians, who do not completely trust God.

- Ignorance about His spiritual possessions
- Unbelief
- Disobedience
- Insufficient love for God and others
- Insufficient prayer life
- Insufficient interest in the Bible



*Impure thoughts | Jealousy | Guilt
Unnecessary worries | Discouragement
Critical attitude | Despair
Aimlessness | Legality (the idea that they
have to earn something from God)*

(Someone, who thinks they are a real Christian, but consistently sins, should examine themselves according to 1 John 2:3, 3:6, 3:9 and Ephesians 5:5 to see if they really are a Christian.)

The third point shows us the sole solution to this problem ...

3. Jesus has promised us a fulfilled and fruitful life. It is the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit, as well as the guidance and authority that the Holy Spirit gives us.

A life filled with the Spirit is a life in which Christ has the leadership. Christ lives His life in us and works in us and through us by the continuous power of the Holy Spirit (John 15).

A. According to John 3:1-8, a person becomes a Christian through the working of the Holy Spirit. At the moment of our spiritual birth, we receive a new life through Christ.

It tells us in John 14:17 that the Holy Spirit stays by and in us.

We should bear in mind:

We received our natural life at birth, which should be preserved. From the outside, it is preserved by air, water, food, etc. It is exactly the same in the spiritual world as in the natural world. We receive our spiritual life – the Bible calls it being born again (John 3:3), when we completely surrender to Christ and attest to this through the biblical baptism in due time (Acts 2:38; John 1:12; John 14:16-17). So that this spiritual life can survive, it needs a life with the Holy Spirit, prayer, God's word, etc.

B. The Holy Spirit is the source of a fulfilled life (John 7:37-39).

C. The Holy Spirit came to exalt Christ. (John 16:1-15) When someone is filled with the Holy Spirit, then they are a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

D. Christ promised us the power of the Holy Spirit in His last words before He ascended into heaven, so that we will be empowered to be His disciples and witnesses (Acts 1:1-9).

How can a person be filled with the Holy Spirit?

4. We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith.

Then we can experience the overflowing and fruitful life, which Christ promised us.

We cannot earn God's abundance – it is a gift. We receive it through faith – by trusting God.

You can experience being filled with the Holy Spirit now, when you:

A. Have a genuine desire to be filled and led by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:6; John 7:37-39).

B. Pray by faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit, in other words, trusting that Jesus Christ will answer your prayer.

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 Spirit”* (John 7:38-39 NKJV)

“... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:14 NKJV)

God has made it easy for us to trust Him by giving us concrete promises. He says in 1 John 5:14 NKJV: *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that **if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.**”*

Those, who pray according to God's will – the next verse says: *“And if we know (at the moment) that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”* (1 John 5:15 NKJV)

Another translation (NIV) says: *“And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him.”*

This means that prayers according to God's will are answered immediately, when we bring them before God, even though we often don't feel anything. Feelings can appear later.

Example: Someone prays to be freed from tobacco. His prayer is answered by faith at the moment he utters his request. A few hours later, he notices that he no longer craves tobacco. (Further details in the letter to Andrew on “Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol.” Praying with promises is also explained in detail.)

Jesus says in Mark 11:24 (NKJV): *“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you [actually] receive them, and you will have them.”*

- C. God has given us a promise in Luke 11:9-13 for receiving the Holy Spirit. We already took a look at it at the beginning of the letter (chapter), hence only verse 13 (NKJV): *“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!”*

How to pray by faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

A prayer using promises strengthens our trust in it being granted and at the same time, it is an opportunity to express our faith. Following is a suggested prayer:

“Father in heaven, I come in the name of Jesus to you. I cannot follow you in my own power. You know my failed attempts. I sincerely ask You to give me the strength to live according to Your will. You commanded me: “Be filled with the Spirit!” (Ephesians 5:18 NKJV) I am willing to be filled. I ask you to please make this reality now, because You have promised that You want to give us the Holy Spirit more than earthly fathers want to give their children good things (Luke 11:13). I want to thank You that you have already filled me, because You have promised that when I pray according to Your will, then I can know that I already have what I asked for (1 John 5:14-15). Please lead me and use me today according to Your will. Amen.”

Does this prayer correspond with your desires? If yes, then make this your prayer now. I recommend that you pray this prayer aloud and trust that God has filled you now with His Holy Spirit.

Assurance that you are filled with the Holy Spirit

Have you asked God to fill you with His Holy Spirit? On the basis of what authority can you know if you have been filled with the Holy Spirit? (Because God and His word are trustworthy: Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:22-23)

Feelings are not crucial. God's promises in His word are vital – not our feelings. A Christian lives by faith, meaning by trusting the reliability of God and His word.

The following illustration should show the relationship between facts (God and His word), faith (our trust in God and His word) and feelings (result of faith and obedience) (John 14:21).



The train can travel with or without wagons. It would be futile for the wagons to pull the locomotive. Likewise, Christians are not dependent on their moods and emotions, rather they put their trust (our faith) in the reliability of God and the promises in His word.

How to live in the Holy Spirit

A Christian can only have a life filled with the Holy Spirit by faith (trust in God and His promises). In so doing, we should pay attention to what 2 Corinthians 4:16 says:

“... yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.” (NKJV)

That is why it is advisable that we dedicate our lives to God every morning and by faith ask Him – preferably with a promise – to be renewed with the Holy Spirit. When you live day by day with trust in Christ, then the following will happen:

- A. Your life will yield more and more fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22); your character will become increasingly similar to Christ's (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18).
- B. Your prayer life and reading God's word will become more meaningful.
- C. You will experience His strength to resist temptations and sin.

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able ...” (1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV)

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13 NKJV)

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” (Ephesians 6:10 NKJV)

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”
(2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV)

“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 [the Holy Spirit] of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1-2 NKJV)

“We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.” (1 John 5:18 NKJV)

D. You will experience God’s support when you witness (Acts 1:8).

E. What should I do about sin?

You can by faith continually experience God’s love and forgiveness. When it becomes clear to you that God doesn’t approve of something (an attitude or deed) in your life, although you live with Him and earnestly want to follow Him, then confess your sin, for example, a wrong, irreconcilability, etc. Then thank Him that He has forgiven your sins because Christ died on the cross. Accept His love and forgiveness by faith and continue to live in fellowship with Him.

When you sin – an act of disobedience – there is a disruption in your relationship with God, then you need to do the following:

1. CONFESSION

Confess your sins by name, agree with God in regards to His judgement of your sin and thank Him for His forgiveness (1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25). Confession includes repentance – a change of attitude or deed.

2. ASKING

Ask again by faith for the Holy Spirit. Trust that He will continue to lead you as He promised in Luke 11:13 and in 1 John 5:14-15.

When these explanations have been of help, then please pass on a copy or read it to someone.

May you have great joy in your new life in God’s power.

Best wishes and blessings,

Helmut and my friend Kurt

(Helmut Haubeil and Kurt Hasel)



Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol

How can one become completely free from addictions with God's help?

Dear Andrew!

Today I want to tell you about a 39-year-old truck driver by the name of Adolf living in Munich-Germany, who wanted to kick the smoking habit. He smoked 60-70 cigarettes every day, and nothing he had tried had worked. So I asked him:

“Would you like to know how, with the help of God, you can get free from smoking, immediately, and with no withdrawal symptoms?”

Yes, indeed. He wanted to know.

I explained to him that I could not help him, I could only show him the way to God; the One who is more than willing and able to help. Adolf accepted God's offer and was immediately and completely delivered. 14 days later, he prayed that God would also free him from drinking beer.

At the time, he had been drinking 10–14 bottles of beer per day. God liberated him from that addiction as well, and Adolf's doctor was amazed at the sudden improvement in his health. One year later, with the money he had saved, Adolf even took a vacation in the USA with his wife and daughters.

Many people have been freed after having spoken a simple prayer, but I wanted to give Adolf some information so he could pray with conviction. With this in mind, we read a few Bible verses.

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.” (1 John 5:14 NKJV)

Here we see a promise that God answers prayers that are in harmony with His will. Let us remember this.

We read together 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 NKJV: *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”* – “What do you think?” I asked, “Is smoking damaging to your health?” “Of course!” he answered. “So, is smoking a sin?” “Yes!”

[I have asked these questions to hundreds of smokers, and almost no one reacts negatively. – More than four million people die every year of diseases caused by smoking.]

Does God want us to sin? No! On the contrary: He wants us **not** to sin. Therefore it is His will that we become free from our addiction to tobacco. **This is a crucial point, because when we understand it, we know that God will certainly answer our prayer for deliverance.**

Then I told Adolf: If smoking is a sin, then it is necessary to ask God for forgiveness. He will gladly grant such a request without delay:

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9 KJV) God promises to forgive every sin that we confess.

Then I continued: “May I ask you a question? If we pray for your deliverance, would you be willing to confess your sin of smoking?” “Yes.” “In that case, God will forgive you” and we can be very grateful for that.

Of course, it would not be a good idea to repeat the same offense after receiving forgiveness. Because God does not want us to continue sinning and hurting ourselves, He is happy to liberate us when we ask Him in faith. We have His promise:

“If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.” (John 8:36 NKJV)

Jesus is speaking here and says, if He sets us free, then we are **really** free. That means we will not want to continue in our old bad habit, and we will not need to do it anymore.

When will He answer?

*“And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know **that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.**”* (1 John 5:15 NKJV)

God hears us and answers us while we are praying, without delay. If that is true, then we can also thank Him for it in the same prayer.

I explained to Adolf that, according to the Bible, there are cases in which God hinges His promises on certain conditions. There are thousands of those in the Bible. God gave them to us so we could know His will and His requirements. The result of knowing these things is, it is easy for us to trust God. When we promise children something, they expect to receive it: in our prayer life, we may and should do the same.

[Although Adolf was actually not a believer, God answered his prayer. I assume He did that for him in order to show him His love and to help him learn to trust Him.]

Wish or Will? – Before we prayed, I asked Adolf a very important question: Would you **like** to stop smoking? (wishful thinking!) or do you **want** to stop smoking? (a decision of the will!) Adolf assured me: “I really want to quit.”

Then I asked: “When do you want to smoke your last cigarette?” I explained to him that it would not be appropriate to smoke his last cigarette after his prayer, if God had already delivered him. His answer: “in that case, I have already smoked my last cigarette!”

Then we discussed the content of the prayer so that he could make an informed decision as to whether he wanted to pray such a prayer or not. He confirmed his wish, but asked me to pray the prayer for him so that he could

repeat it, sentence for sentence, as he did not want to forget anything. Then we knelt down together. After I had prayed for my ministry and especially for the presence of God with us, we prayed the following prayer together: I have spoken the prayer sentence by sentence and – according to his wish – Adolf repeated it.

[This small remark is for those who do not believe in God or are uncertain about it: Please pray before the basic prayer additionally the following short prayer – if you like this:]

“Almighty God in heaven, I do not know if You exist. But if You do exist, then please answer my prayer and grant my request for deliverance, so that I may know that You are here and that You care about me.”

“Father in heaven, I thank You that I may come to You with my problem. I confess that I have damaged my body with my smoking. I am so glad that You forgive me for this sin, because I am confessing it to You. You have promised in Your Word: If we confess our sins, You will forgive us. Thank You that You have already forgiven me. But Father, I have another problem. I am addicted to smoking and cannot get free. I have often tried to quit, but have not succeeded. Now I ask You with all my heart to take away my desire and taste for tobacco – completely, because You have promised: So if the Son of Man [Jesus Christ] sets you free, you will really be free. And since Your Word also says that You grant every request that is according to Your will and that we already have the things we have asked of You, I thank You now that You have already set me free. With Your help, I will never smoke again. I thank You and praise You for Your gracious help. Amen.”

When we stood up I hugged him and congratulated Adolf on the great victory that God had given him. From that prayer on, he no longer had any desire or taste for tobacco, and no withdrawal symptoms – he never smoked again.

After that, I counseled him on how he could help cleanse his body from toxins by drinking lots of water, getting plenty of exercise in fresh air, etc. Some people put hazelnuts (nerve food) or juniper berries (blood cleanser) in the spot where their cigarettes used to be, so when their hand goes through the old, well-practiced motions, it will find something good there. It is also a good idea to avoid smokers, since they often try to reconvert ex-smokers back to their old habits.

Adolf did not notice any difference immediately after the prayer – we must receive such answers to **prayer in faith**. However, when he still had no desire to smoke several hours later, the answer to his prayer became very obvious and **practical**.

Starting the next day, Adolf did something completely new. He took 15 minutes every morning to read in the Bible and pray. It strengthened him in his decision to remain free from all addictions.

After two weeks, Adolf asked me to visit him again and help him with another problem: his daily consumption of beer was at 10–14 bottles, and he wanted to be free of that too. So we prayed for deliverance from alcohol just as we had for tobacco. [We can use the same Bible verses to pray for deliverance from all forms of sinful bondage.] In this case also, God gave him immediate victory, without any problems.

One week later, I visited Adolf with the intention of helping him, if he so wished, to develop a personal relationship with God.

Together we read the pamphlet “Seize Life,” which sparked his interest in beginning a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and he was willing to pray the prayer he had read in that leaflet:

“Lord Jesus Christ, I want to thank You that You died and rose again for me. I am a sinner, please forgive me. Please come into my life now. I can’t save myself. I can’t earn eternal life. That is why I trust You. Free me from the power of evil. Give me strength to follow You. I surrender myself to You with everything I have and am. I accept eternal life. I haven’t earned it; but I thank You for this gift. Amen.”

Suggested Prayer

We carefully read the prayer twice before we actually prayed. That way, Adolf could be sure he agreed with it. Then we knelt down with the little booklet open in our hands and prayed together out loud. I explained to him that this prayer of dedication to Jesus Christ could be compared with an engagement. Getting engaged is a private event, which is followed by a time of getting to know each other better, which then leads up to the wedding.

So, after this prayer, there would also be a time of getting to know Jesus better by spending time reading the Word of God and praying, maybe joining a Bible study group, going to church, etc.

The wedding, which follows the engagement at the right time, can be compared with baptism, as it is described in the Bible.

Adolf has followed that path and is so happy for the forgiveness of all his sins, for deliverance from the bondage of his addictions, for God's rich blessings in his life, for fellowship with likeminded Christians, for the assurance that the love of God surrounds him completely and for the hope of eternal life in the presence of God.

May you be encouraged and blessed by this experience.

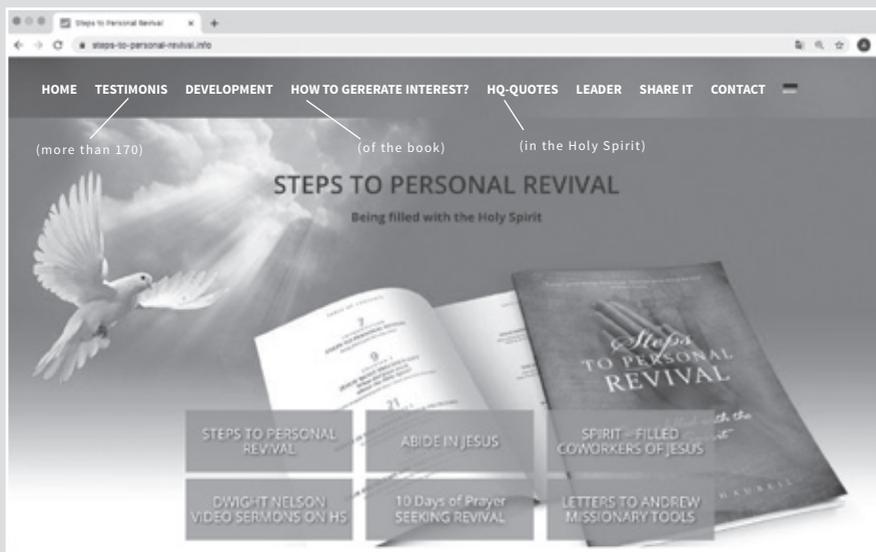
Warm greetings from

Helmut

Of course, one can also walk this path alone, but Adolf did not know the way and was looking for help. If you would also like assistance, please call:

WWW.STEPS-TO-PERSONAL-REVIVAL.INFO

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Audiobook „Steps to personal Revival“ Speaker: Mike Fenton

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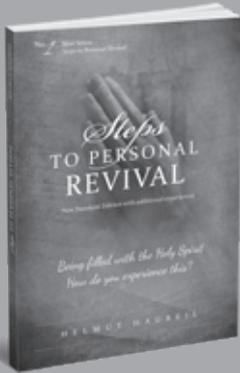
Video Sermons by Dwight Nelson

„Steps to Personal Revival“ – 7 parts and

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Video Sermons by Helmut Haubeil

17 Letters to Andrew – Tried and tested missionary Tools to build relationships of faith (more Spirit-Filled Coworkers of Jesus, Chapters 7 and 9)



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

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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?

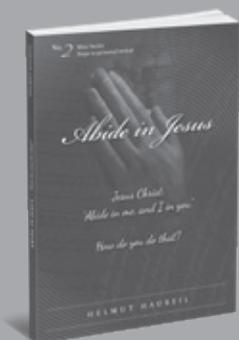
Personal experiences, as well as experiences from churches, a conference and a union

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?



**BOOK 2: www.steps-to-personal-revival.info
STEPS TO PERSONAL REVIVAL**

**ABIDE IN JESUS
HOW DO YOU DO THAT?**

“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. E.G. White (*Desire of Ages*, DA p.676.2)

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“Abiding in Him is not a work that we have to do as a condition in order to enjoy His salvation. Rather it is our consent to let Him do everything for us, in us, and through us. It is a work He does for us – the result and the power of His redeeming love. Our part is simply to yield, to trust, and to wait for Him to accomplish what He has promised.” (Andrew Murray)

CHAPTER 1: JESUS’ MOST PRECIOUS GIFT

Are you acquainted with Jesus’ most powerful message? What functions does the Holy Spirit have? How can our character be changed? Jesus on the Holy Spirit in the Parable about the Leaven

CHAPTER 2: SURRENDER TO JESUS

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

CHAPTER 3: JESUS ABIDING IN YOU

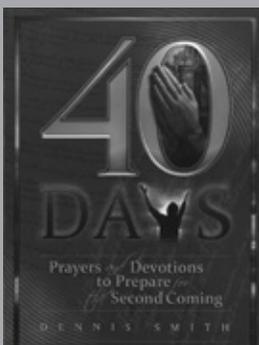
*What effects does “Christ in me” have on my life?
The ultimate achievement: being imbued with the fullness of God.
The Effects of “Christ in you”. How do we get deliverance from the power of sin?
Will we become “carnal” again by sinning?*

CHAPTER 4: OBEDIENCE THROUGH JESUS?

How can I live in joyful obedience? What is joy? How does obedience through “Jesus in me” work? God has designed: Collaboration between God and Man.

CHAPTER 5: 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?*



40-DAYS – BOOK 1:

PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONS to Prepare for the Second Coming

Dennis Smith

Order: www.spiritbaptism.org

**Do you desire a more meaningful study and prayer life?
Do you feel the need to reach out to others for Christ?**

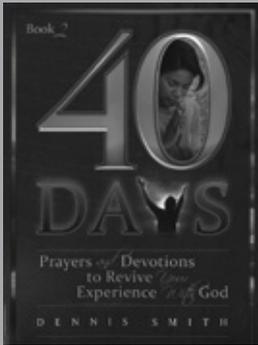
If so, you've come to the right place. This book contains 40 days of devotional studies designed to strengthen your relationship with Christ and enable you to lead others to Him.

Why 40 days?

The Bible tells of several significant events that took this specific span of time:

- Rain fell for 40 days during the Flood.
- Moses was on Mount Sinai with God for 40 days.
- The Israelite spies took 40 days to explore the Promised Land.
- Jonah warned Nineveh for 40 days.
- Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness after His baptism.
- Jesus spent 40 days with the disciples after His resurrection.

God wants to do something significant in your life, too. Not only does He long to draw you into closer fellowship with Him – He also wants to minister to others through you. And as you spend 40 amazing days with God, He will prepare you for earth's final crisis and Christ's long-anticipated second coming.



40-DAYS – BOOK 2:

PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONS to Revive Your Experience with God

Dennis Smith

Order: www.spiritbaptism.org

What difference can 40 days make?

A lot, if you're praying. Join Dennis Smith on a 40-Days spiritual journey that will change your life. As you commit to 40 days of personal devotional study and prayer, your prayer life will become more consistent and effective, your faith will grow as you witness answered prayers, and your connection with fellow believers will deepen.

Each day's uplifting devotional reading is followed by a related prayer activity and personal reflection and discussion questions. If you've longed for a spiritual breakthrough but didn't know where to begin, start here. Smith will guide you through 40 days of practical biblical teachings that are essential for every Christian to study.

In the style of Smith's popular 40-Days: Prayer and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming, this book can help revive the spiritual experience of individuals, small groups, and entire churches. Find out for yourself what an amazing difference 40 days can make.

Spirit-Filled COWORKERS OF JESUS

How do we become such people?

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!