



God's Ingenious Idea

Serving, giving, helping. Why and what for?

*Dear Andrew,**

At first, this topic sounds “old-fashioned”, because who wants to be seen as a servant? We would much rather determine our own lives and if possible, control the lives of others.

Nevertheless, life isn't possible without serving, giving and helping. God created our world so that one serves, helps and gives to another. Without photosynthesis in green plants, we wouldn't have any oxygen to breath. And on the other hand, our CO₂ helps the plants. The atoms, cells, circulatory systems and mutual interdependencies all speak the same language: they all work “hand-in-hand” together and are dependent on one another.

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

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!

Two Different Fundamental Attitudes

Since God is love (1 John 4:16), His fundamental attitude is giving!

But He not only wants to give to us, but rather we should give to others and we get much more in return, as when He had blessed us directly. In this way, not only one person is blessed, but rather multiple people, often many people and sometimes even the whole world. This is God's ingenious way.

Since evil is egoistic (Isaiah 14:13-14: *“I will exalt my throne above the stars of God ...”*), its fundamental attitude is: Me! Me! Taking! Having! Egoism! Being the greatest!

* Andrew after the biblical Andrew in John 1:41-42.

The Law of Action and Reaction

“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.” (Ellen G. White, *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, p. 360.4-361.1)

Let's take a closer look at this quote:

- › 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 produces true joy in us.

What does God do in us, when we serve, help, give and bless?

1. As a result, our goodwill for others grows. It is a healing process for our egoism.
2. Our service is a blessing for others and often leads to their affection.
3. Serving, giving and helping reflects back on us; God returns the blessings to us.
4. We learn by doing. By serving others we develop a good character and we promote our practical, mental and spiritual abilities.
5. Service keeps me close to Jesus' heart. Because those who think only of themselves, ruin step-by-step their friendship with God and thus their spiritual life.
6. Those who are willing to help, avoid tension and controversy in the family, at work and in society.

A Biblical Example of Giving

We can find a wonderful example in John 6:9-13. Remember Jesus feeding the 5,000 men plus women and children? A boy gave Jesus five small barley loaves and two fish. Jesus thanked God for the food, multiplied it and fed the great multitude with the small gift. The boy gave everything he had to Jesus.

He didn't keep anything for himself. But I think he ate more than his fill! This experience must have given him great joy. He definitely remembered this event for the rest of his life.

A short 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 they are. In God’s kingdom, it always works like this: the giver always receives more than the recipient.” (D. K. Bolivia/South America #132)

Helping helps

Through the example of children, we can see what God originally placed in peoples’ hearts. 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 very minimal. 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 in all of them.

What would happen if the parents didn’t allow the child to “help”? The child feels belittled and loses the desire to offer his help. And later on, he will only learn to “cope with life” with great effort.

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)

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. Think again about how children want to help. The child is happy when he can “help” or “serve”. God knows that service is good for us.

Serving, Giving and Helping in a Church

Not only do “natural” people not like to serve, but “carnal” Christians as well (someone, who doesn’t have the Holy Spirit and tries to live in his own power with God). Therefore, most church members first have to become willing to serve. 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)

It is the church leaders and pastor’s duty to teach their church members how they can obtain a service-minded mindset; they have to daily invite the Holy Spirit to lead their thoughts, plans, feelings, desires and actions. This presupposes that they practice this themselves. Then they should emphasize how important service for God and our fellowman is for us and the life of our church.

And lastly, they should instruct and train church members in many different 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.

Serving, Giving and Helping in the Bible

We can find many verses in the Bible showing that serving, giving and helping is blessed by God.

“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.” (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. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NIV, see also verses 9-15)

Here are two quotes from a gifted authority on the Bible 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.” (Ellen G. White, *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.” (Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 148.4)

That means: Whoever doesn't give what he has, also loses what he has.

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 or haven't even entered a relationship with Him. An intensive love and trust relationship with Jesus protects us from egoism and motivates us to serve others. As a result, we are in turn blessed!

Intensive activities in church are not what is being sought, but rather service, which is guided by the Holy Spirit. Jesus has to “play first fiddle” in our lives. He can do this when He lives 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 delights in doing something out of love and gratitude to Him. 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 will work through us.

But if we have to answer the question above with no, then we should immediately entrust ourselves to Jesus' love in prayer and with a willingness to follow Him in everything. We should also ask for a "*renewing of the Holy Spirit*" (Titus 3:5) in our lives. Then Jesus can live in our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Take enough time every day for your relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit! This is the only way we can 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. Only so will we experience joy in God and His Word. This is the only way we will grow closer to God's heart.

"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.'" (Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 259.1-2)

The Law of Service – a vital matter

"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." (Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 103.2-3)

Service during my Business Career

An example from my time as a businessman illustrates the law of service. As a young businessman in Frankfurt am Main, I took a correspondence course on planning and rational work. The course manuscripts repeatedly challenged us to search for a customer's need and to offer a solution.

Because fulfilling a need for our customers results in customer loyalty and consequently, we receive our income, livelihood and profit. The more benefits we offer, the greater our “benefit harvest” will be. The author of the course clearly understood that we live under the law of service. He expressed this approach in his own words.

At that time, I was a dispatcher for a freight forwarding company. One day, I asked my boss for permission to visit a few companies, because I wanted to learn how we could win them as clients. He gave me permission. He was an excellent salesman and believed I should give each company at least one pack of cigarettes. I did this two times, but then I had a guilty conscience, because I knew how unhealthy cigarettes are. I asked God for forgiveness and promised to never do it again. In addition, I prayed that God would help me to find a correct way to sell. At this time, a recommendation came from the institute to prepare me for field work by studying the book *Live enthusiastically and win* by Frank Bettger.

This book helped me to plan a completely different and entirely correct sales strategy.

Many of the factory logistics managers wouldn't even see me. I prayed and contemplated what I could do. I called the logistics managers again and asked them to meet with me so that we could find out if we could offer them any advantages or not. I told them: “If we can offer you advantages that you don't have now, then you will definitely be interested in us.

But if we shouldn't be able to offer you any advantages, then I promise that I won't come a second time.” Subsequently, all of the companies met with me and provided me with detailed information about the quantity and methods used for their shipment products. At the end of our conversation, I promised to go over everything carefully and to get back to them. After examining everything, we were able to offer almost all the companies one or more advantages. We were almost always able to make a deal. Initially, on a small scale in the area where we could offer an advantage. However, since we did such a good job, we became more and more involved in the business of these companies. God blessed my efforts since I sought the best for our clients.

Psalm 1 foretells a great blessing for those who “*walk not in the counsel of the ungodly*” (for example, giving cigarettes), but rather heed God's Word. Verse 3: “... *and whatever he does shall prosper.*” (NKJV) We can say: live enthusiastically and victoriously through Jesus.

Service – Delight or Burden?

Most people more likely associate the word service with the word burden than with delight. How can that be changed?

“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.**” (Ellen 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 joyfully!

That is why it is so important to daily take these vital steps during morning devotions:

- Examine ourselves for any existing sin. If yes, we pray for remorse, confession, conversion and forgiveness. Normally, no sin will be present. Then we thank God that He has fulfilled His promise: *“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)
- Ask by faith – with a promise (e. g. Luke 11:13) – to be filled by the Holy Spirit.
- Tell Jesus that you are placing your whole life at His disposal (The Desire of Ages, p. 676).
- Place myself under God's protection (1 John 5:18).

(A model prayer can be found in *Steps to Personal Revival*, chapter 5.)

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 can be a pole laid across the shoulders to make it easier to carry heavy buckets. Or a yoke connects two draft animals so that they can work 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 refers to the padded shoulder poles and tells me that Jesus won't overwhelm us, when we “take the yoke” together with Him. The “pads” on this yoke are meekness and humility. Because we make our lives unnecessarily difficult with a know-it-all attitude and being opinionated. Whoever is humble, knows that they don't carry the main responsibility and don't have to do things “alone and better”. Knowing that Jesus is helping you carry your load, makes you relaxed, friendly and gentle. And because this is so, He could then say that the load we have to carry is actually 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**. **Why do we serve others?** We want to make their lives easier, do something nice for them so that they feel valuable and lovable. Maybe through these acts of love they will be open to God’s love and are more likely to accept that they are wanted by Him. By our service we can witness effectively of God’s love through our being and conduct and share what a wonderful friend and Savior we have found in Jesus.” (*Sharing Jesus Isn’t Something We Do. It’s Who We Are. Why Didn’t They Tell Me?* PPPA 2005)

A special Service: Witnessing

Why does Jesus have us be His witnesses through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)? The Holy Spirit changes us and gives us wonderful experiences. When we share such an experience, this has the greatest power of persuasion.

An example: In Mark 5:1-20 reports how Jesus healed a demon-possessed man. After he was freed, the man wanted to stay with Jesus. He wanted to join Jesus and His disciples. But Jesus didn’t let him and instead 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)

Ellen 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. As the saying goes: “For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.” They not only told their relatives what Jesus had done for them, but rather they told their story in the whole region. 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.**” (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 78.2)

Yes, these healed men had a lot to tell! They were filled with joy because Jesus had freed them from the power of the demons. 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, cooperating with heavenly agencies, have the benefit of their education and experience. As a means of education, what "university course" can equal this?" (Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 271.1)

We witness in many situations. A mother, who shows her children how to pray and trust God, is also an "evangelist" and no less important than a pastor, who speaks to thousands. Christ wants to make us witnesses through the Holy Spirit so that other people can find the way to Him.

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.

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

A steward receives the task of caring for his fellow workers during the absence of his master. When the master returns and finds the steward diligently doing his work, then he will give this dependable person even greater responsibilities.

But if that steward was unreliable and thinks that he has a lot of time before his master returns and mistreats his fellow workers instead of giving them what they need for their subsistence, then he will come to a bad end.

Jesus illustrates here that it is important to perform our tasks faithfully and reliably and to always treat our fellow men lovingly and respectably. In this way, we are always prepared for His coming.

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

Ten bridesmaids were waiting for the groom. They wanted to accompany him the rest of the way to the home of the bride. They wanted to light the dark path with their oil lamps. Five of them had some extra oil along in case they needed more. The other five didn't bring any extra oil. The groom's arrival was delayed and all of them became tired and fell asleep. When the groom suddenly arrived at midnight, they all woke up and lighted their lamps.

The wise girls had enough extra oil. But the lamps of the other girls only burned a short time and then went out. Underway they wanted to quickly get some more oil, but when they arrived at the celebration hall, the door was closed. The bridegroom didn't know them and didn't let them in.

Jesus illustrates here that we need to be filled sufficiently with the Holy Spirit. It's not enough to have a little of the Holy Spirit. This means: we need a personal, close relationship with Jesus, who lives in us through the Holy Spirit so that we are really prepared for His second coming.

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

A businessman wanted to take a trip and called together his employees in order to divide up his assets amongst them. During his absence each person should manage their allocated money well and multiply it.

Two employees worked diligently with the money and make a good profit. But the third one just hid the money. When the businessman returned, he rewarded the two diligent men with greater responsibility. He asked the third man why he hadn't at least taken the money to the bank so it could earn interest. But this man had a completely wrong picture about his boss. He didn't trust him and insinuated that he exploited others and didn't treat them fairly. It's no wonder this man was fired!

Jesus illustrates here that our service for Him and our fellowman *must come from the right attitude*. Whoever serves God out of love and trust will be most welcome in God's new world.

"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." (Ellen G. White, *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 without any expectations, who exercised practical brotherly love. He places the others to His left. They are the ones who haven't helped others, when they needed help.

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 “second nature”. They are often completely unaware of this!

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 surrounding area. This is a great chance to show Jesus how much we love and adore Him! (Taken from the *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 NKJV)

The text clearly says that God has saved us by grace! Our part is to accept this pardon with confidence. 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 trust relationship, then we remain saved. And our desire to serve is a fruit – a result of our salvation.

Let’s add a text from 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 will and to their best interest. Step by step selfishness loses its power. And I am safeguarded against my faith fading or losing it completely. My life becomes attractive to other people. They can discern a different, appealing lifestyle. This creates ideal 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. They are happy with their experience with me. And the chance that they will open their heart for the gospel increases. They pass it on and the blessing is multiplied.

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

This is why I pray every morning: *“Father in heaven, please make me willing and ready for anything You want. Hebrews 13:20-21: Now may the God of peace ... make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ ...”* (NKJV) God ensures that we do this voluntarily and gladly.

The Life of Jesus – an Unparalleled Example

Jesus was the greatest example for this lifestyle. The Bible calls it: *“through love serve one another.”* (Galatians 5:13 NKJV)

Unfortunately, the disciples didn't sufficiently understand this after being with Jesus for more than three years. They even quarreled during Jesus' last days on earth about who would be the greatest. But in Jesus' great love and wisdom, He didn't start an argument with them. He girded Himself with a towel and washed everyone's feet. They never forgot this example.

He opened their eyes to their egoism and Jesus' great love.

They were very ashamed and understood what Jesus wanted to tell them!

Jesus wanted this symbolic service to be practiced in the future, because He said: *“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, **you also ought to wash one another's feet.** For I have given you **an example, that you should do as I have done to you ...** If you know these things, **blessed are you if you do them.**”* (John 13:14-17 NKJV)

After this foot washing, they had the last supper together. We see here that Jesus not only taught His disciples a lesson, but at the same time He instituted the symbolic action of the foot washing before the communion service in His church. The foot washing and communion service will never become merely a formality for those filled with the Holy Spirit, but rather a constant reminder of the lesson: “through love serve one another.”

Why are there tensions and controversies?

Why are there tensions and controversies in families? Maybe behind them are the questions: Who is the greatest? Who has the final say? Why do marriages end in divorce?

Because everyone wants to make the decisions and wants to be right? No one wants to relent or ask for forgiveness?

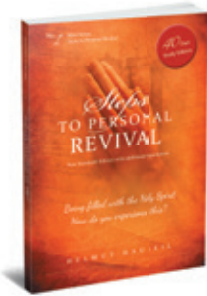
Could it be that we haven't yet understood the true meaning of the foot washing? Because it reminds us of our baptism, where Jesus "washed" everything away, forgave us of everything and reconciled us with God. In the same way, we should forgive one another and reconcile ourselves with them. To show our willingness for this, we wash each other's feet – no, not the head – but rather the feet!

Jesus wants to make us a blessing for others through loving service by being filled with the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). And this blessing returns to us added, multiplied and even exponentiated!

An amazing lifestyle! A wonderful path! We want to traverse it with God's power and joy.

With kind regards and blessings,

Helmut



BOOK 1: 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 Ellen G. White, *Mount of Blessing*, MB 20.3 (egwwritings.org)

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

www.steps-to-personal-revival.info

FOREWORD FOR LEADERS AND FUTURE LEADERS MULTIPLYING THE RESULTS

CHAPTER 1: JESUS' MOST PRECIOUS GIFT

What did Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit?

Are you acquainted with Jesus' most powerful message?

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS THE CENTER OF OUR PROBLEMS?

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

What is the main problem with being a carnal Christian?

CHAPTER 3: OUR PROBLEMS ARE SOLVABLE

What is God's solution for our problems? How can we grow to be happy and strong Christians? What is the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER 4: WHAT DIFFERENCES CAN WE EXPECT?

What advantage do we have with a life filled with the Holy Spirit

What do we lose when we don't pray for the Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER 5: THE KEY TO PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

How can I implement and experience God's solution for me?

How should I pray so that I am sure of being filled with the Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER 6: WHAT EXPERIENCES LIE AHEAD OF US?

Personal experiences, as well as experiences from churches, a conference and a union

CHAPTER 7: INTEREST AND SHARING

The Joy that we give returns to our own hearts. (German Proverb)

How can I help others to experience "Life in Abundance"?

How do we pass on the message? Which ways are there?

Read
more



BOOK 2: 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.

Ellen G. White (*Desire of Ages, DA, p.676.2*)

www.steps-to-personal-revival.info

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?

