



Does this scenario sound familiar?

You decide you're going to give your life to Jesus and start spending some time with Him each day. You have a wonderful time for a few days. Then, you reach a stretch where it doesn't seem so meaningful so you begin skimping a bit, skipping a day or two here and there. And before you know it, it's been a few weeks since you spent any meaningful time with Jesus.

Or how about this one?

You decide you're going to start spending some meaningful time with Jesus each day. It's meaningful and good for a week or two, or even a month. Then, you come across something you feel like God is asking you to do that you really don't want to do or think you can do. You agonize over it for a few days, but as you keep putting it off, it becomes less and less urgent in your thinking. But you find yourself stuck in your time with Jesus so you start spending less time there. Pretty soon you're not spending any time alone with Jesus.

I have been in both situations. And in each case, getting past it required me to yield my feelings and my agenda to God.

One of the biggest obstacles to your growth in Jesus is a failure to trust Him enough to actually align your actions up with His instructions.

If you are trying to learn how to swim, but you don't ever get into the water; how likely are you to become a good swimmer?

You can study the topic indefinitely and become an expert on the theory of swimming, but you will never really understand swimming, nor will you learn to swim if you refuse to get into the water!

The same is true in your relationship with God. You can study all about what He wants you to do until you feel you understand it; but, until you actually do what He asks you to do – get in the water so to speak – you will not grow.

Doing what God asks you to do once will give you more understanding of God and your relationship with Him than a year of studying it while you stall giving in to Him.

Yield

Yield is the final part of the P.R.A.Y. model we have been looking at. In many ways, it is most important. It is the step that translates thoughts and principles into actions, habits, and life-long patterns that will continually bring you closer to all God wants you to become. (Go to the [notes section](#) at the end or [click here](#) to view a copy of the P.R.A.Y. Guide.)

The issue isn't that God somehow loves you less right now the way you are – God demonstrated His love for you by dying for you before you ever made any move towards Him.

But He loves you too much to leave you the way you are right now. He knows that the closer you live the way you were designed to, the more joy and peace you will experience. The closer you come to Him, the more love you will have for others – and the more you will look forward to the eternity God has planned for you.

His goal is to continually move us closer and closer to that ideal, one step at a time. And, as long as we cooperate in this process and stick with Him we are secure for eternity.

Yielding simply means cooperating with God as He continually leads us in this process.

The danger of not yielding to God is this: saying “no” to God can become a pattern that will cause us to not hear His voice as clearly and will move us away from God to the point that we separate ourselves from His influence in our lives. That will lead to tragedy.

Before we look at our main passage, we're going to review some familiar verse that speak to yielding. The first, is Jesus' familiar invitation found in Matthew 11:

“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

([Matthew 11:28-30](#), NLT)

We focus on the *rest* part, but tend to miss the heart of what Jesus is really saying. The rest He offers is dependent on you coming to Jesus and staying with Him. Using the image of a yoke, He is saying you need to submit your life to His leading.

In this invitation He invites you to make one change in your life that will keep you on a path where God can give you rest: Develop the habit of hanging out with Jesus for the purpose of coming to know Him and learning to trust Him.

It is in your personal time with Jesus that you will discover the steps He wants you to take, find motivation to follow Jesus, and power to keep taking the steps that will lead that will transform your life. The rest comes from knowing that someone stronger and smarter is in charge.

Here is another familiar passage:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6, NIV)

Notice here that the emphasis is not on how you will feel, but on trusting God enough to submit your life to Him. The promise then is that He will prepare the way for you.

Think about this for a moment:

- God knows what is coming
- He knows how to deal with it
- He knows what you need to be doing right now to prepare for it
- He is guided by His love for you and His desire to be with you for eternity.

Given these facts, why wouldn't you trust Him?

And then there is this verse at the heart of what we call the **Sermon on the Mount**:

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you." (Matthew 6:33, CSB)

This statement comes at the end of a section where Jesus is discussing your basic needs. He is telling you and me what is the most important priority in life. It's not stuff, but staying connected with Him.

The promise again is if you will do this, He will be sure your needs are met!

And then there is this verse, spoken on the evening before His arrest and death, where He made His priority for you and me straightforward and simple – though not necessarily easy. It is a concept He repeated several times that evening.

"... I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." (John 13:34-35, NLT)

Your love for people will be the proof that you are Jesus' follower. This is what we, as Seventh-day Adventist Christians should be known for above everything else. He then makes sure we understand what this love will look like – it will look like Him being willing to give up His life for yours and my salvation!

What is the main message you see in these verses? What is God saying to you?

Philippians 2:3-8

In his letter to the Philippian Church, Paul wrote:

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

(Philippians 2:3-4, NLT)

Then Paul, expanding on the concept of the passage in **John 13:34-35** we just looked at, make this difficult statement:

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

(Philippians 2:5-8, NLT)

Do you find this challenging? I sure do!

One of the things hardest for me to do is to move into things I think will make me uncomfortable. I like my life rather predictable, I like to be comfortable, and I like to feel in control.

Jesus gave up the most comfortable place in the Universe for a life that was anything but predictable and allowed God to have complete control.

Jesus actually allowed Himself to be led through an excruciating experience so He could accomplish what He had come to do – which was provide a path to salvation for us sinners. He literally gave up His life for you and me.

Paul – echoing Jesus' words we just looked at recorded in **John 13:34-35**, tells us to have that same attitude. He says we should value the salvation of others more than our own comfort and our own lives.

If this doesn't scare you, you're much stronger than I am.

But, here's the point.

This is the target we are to aim at. This is where God will keep moving us toward. This is not necessarily what He expects from you today.

It is noteworthy that this took place after Jesus had been serving God for quite some time. Just like you and me, He had to come to know His Father and develop a relationship with Him. He had developed the habit of spending considerable time in His Father's presence and the habit of saying "yes" when God gave Him directions.

Even so, when it came right down to the final acts of His life, His humanity wanted desperately to find another way. The struggle in the Garden prior to His arrest confirms this. Making the choice to finish what He started was so hard He actually sweat blood.

But, when He made the decision to follow God's plan regardless of personal consequences, He received strength from Heaven. There is no further evidence of the struggle. God gave Him strength to do what was needed.

Thankfully, God doesn't ask us to do anything He will not give us the power to do.

The more time you spend with Jesus, the more you will see and adopt His characteristics. You will start to see others through Jesus' perspective and your love for others will grow.

The trust it takes in God to give up your life for someone else's salvation grows day by day as we continually say yes to God. He takes us from where we are right now towards the ideal He has for us as expressed by Paul.

Our job is twofold.

First it is to deliberately and regularly come into His presence to get to know Him better and to fall in love with Him. Our life is shaped much more by Who we love than by what we know.

Second, it is to say "yes" each day as He asks us to take a small step in His direction.

- Maybe it will begin simply as a conversation with a neighbor where you discover a need they have that you can help with.
- Maybe it will involve paying tithe or sharing some your resources with someone in need.
- Maybe it will begin as a phone call to someone God has put on your mind.

I don't know what it will be, but I do know that saying "yes" when you sense God asking something of you is critical for you. As you say yes to the little things and sense His leading, you will learn to trust Him more and more. This is the only way to develop trust in your life.

In the context of Jesus' obedience to God, the devotional book, *Desire of Ages*, says:

All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses ... When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an

appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us. ([Desire of Ages, page 668](#))

The way we come to know God and learn to appreciate His character is by spending regular, quality time with Him listening to Him speak through the Bible and sharing our hearts with Him through prayer.

What is the hardest thing you see here in this passage? What about it gives you courage to push forward?

Assignment

Spend a bit of time this week looking at the stories of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ([Daniel 3](#)) and John the Baptist ([Matthew 11:1-19](#) and [14:1-12](#)). These are both stories of people who aligned their lives with God's plan. Remember to approach this prayerfully with an open heart ([Matthew 7:7-12](#) – keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking)!

- This week, read [Daniel 3](#), [Matthew 11:1-19](#), and [14:1-12](#) through several times.
- How are these stories similar? How are they different?
- How do these stories illustrate the principles found in [Philippians 2:1-11](#)?
- What things bring you hope and encouragement in these stories?
- What are some things about this story that you find challenging?
- What do you think God is telling you through these stories?
- Where do you need to yield to Him in your life today?

Notes

Text you find in [this color](#) is a link to more information. It may take you to the Bible verse in context and/or in several different translations utilizing [BibleGateway.com](#). In some cases, it may take you to a website where there is additional information. And, it may take you to a PDF copy of previous sermons in this series.

Previous Sermons in this Series

Click on the title to view a PDF document of the sermon.

- Dec. 28, 2019 – *A Yoke?* ([Click here](#) to watch it)
- Jan. 11, 2020 – *L, O, or LOL?* ([Click here](#) to watch it)
- Jan. 25, 2020 – *Dig In!*
- Feb. 15, 2020 – *Loving the Law?* ([Click here](#) to watch it)
- Feb. 22, 2020 – *Abide/P.R.A.Y.*
- Mar. 14, 2020 – *Pause* ([Click here](#) to watch it)
- Mar. 28, 2020 – *Rejoice + Reflect* ([Click here](#) to watch it)
- Apr. 4, 2020 – *Ask* ([Click here](#) to watch it)

P.R.A.Y.

[Click here](#) to download and print a copy to keep in your Bible.

Pause: **Pause to be still in God's Presence.** *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him ...*
([Psalm 37:7](#), NIV)

1. *Find a place where you can stop and be quiet with God.*
2. *Invite the Holy Spirit to be present with you.*
3. *Read or say from memory a passage of Scripture that reminds you who God and His interest in you ([Isaiah 40:28-31](#) and [Isaiah 41:13](#) are great for this – [click here](#) to download a printable copy of these verse to keep with you).*

Rejoice + Reflect: **Rejoice with a Psalm and Reflect on Scripture.** *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!* ([Philippians 4:4](#), NIV)

1. *Read a Bible passage or listen to a song that helps you to connect with God – there are many Psalms that do this well.*
2. *Invite the Holy Spirit to show you something to rejoice over.*
3. *Prayerfully work your way through a passage or book of the Bible, taking the time to notice and learn God's promises – don't rush, it's more important that you understand and internalize a short passage than to read several chapters a day.*

4. Keep notes of what you are learning so you can go back and see your journey with God.

Ask: Ask for God's help – for yourself and others. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you ..." (Matthew 7:7, NIV)

1. Share what's on your heart, asking God to provide, protect and encourage you. Be specific.
2. Think of people in your life who need God to move in their situations. Ask for God to be at work and to show you how to share God's love with them.

Yield: Yield to God's will in your life. "... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well ..." (Matthew 6:33, NIV)

1. Think of a situation which feels challenging, stressful or uncertain. Invite God's kingdom to reign
2. What are you holding onto, today? Invite the Holy Spirit to challenge you to let go and trust God
3. Many of God's promises have conditions you need to meet in order to experience what He promises. Most of the time this will involve yielding in some way that will bring your life more into harmony with Him.
4. When you make the choice to yield to Him, God will empower you to act on your choice.

Scripture References

Psalm 19:6-14 (NKJV): The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸ the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹ the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. ¹¹ Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

¹² Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. ¹³ Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer. (Psalm 19:6-14, NKJV)

Proverbs 3:5-12 (NIV): Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. ⁸ This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

⁹ Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰ then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

¹¹ My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline, and do not resent his rebuke, ¹² because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in. (Proverbs 3:5-12, NIV)

Jeremiah 31:33-34 (NIV): "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."
(Jeremiah 31:33-34, NIV)

Ezekiel 36:25-27 (NLT): "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. Your filth will be washed away, and you will no longer worship idols. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations." (Ezekiel 36:25-27, NLT)

Daniel 3 (NLT): King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. ² Then he sent messages to the high officers, officials, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to come to the dedication of the statue he had set up. ³ So all these officials came and stood before the statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁴ Then a herald shouted out, "People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king's command! ⁵ When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue. ⁶ Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

⁷ So at the sound of the musical instruments, all the people, whatever their race or nation or language, bowed to the ground and worshiped the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁸ But some of the astrologers went to the king and informed on the Jews. ⁹ They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "Long live the king! ¹⁰ You issued a decree requiring all the people to bow down and worship the gold statue when they hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments. ¹¹ That decree also states that those who refuse to obey must be thrown into a blazing furnace. ¹² But there are some Jews – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – whom you have put in charge of the province of Babylon. They pay no attention to you, Your Majesty. They refuse to serve your gods and do not worship the gold statue you have set up."

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought before him. When they were brought in, ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true,

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up? ¹⁵ I will give you one more chance to bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. And then what god will be able to rescue you from my power?"

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. ¹⁸ But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."

¹⁹ Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual. ²⁰ Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. ²¹ So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully dressed in their pants, turbans, robes, and other garments. ²² And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in. ²³ So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell into the roaring flames.

²⁴ But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, "Didn't we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?"

"Yes, Your Majesty, we certainly did," they replied.

²⁵ "Look!" Nebuchadnezzar shouted. "I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like a god!"

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!"

So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire. ²⁷ Then the high officers, officials, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke!

²⁸ Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. ²⁹ Therefore, I make this decree: If any people, whatever their race or nation or language, speak a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they will be torn limb from limb, and their houses will be turned into heaps of rubble. There is no other god who can rescue like this!"

³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in the province of Babylon. (Daniel 3, NLT)

Matthew 6:19-34 (CSB): “Don’t store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light.

²³ But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. So if the light within you is darkness, how deep is that darkness!

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you: Don’t worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing?

²⁶ Consider the birds of the sky: They don’t sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than they? ²⁷ Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying? ²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don’t labor or spin thread. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. ³⁰ If that’s how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won’t he do much more for you – you of little faith?

³¹ “So don’t worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’

³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. ³⁴ Therefore don’t worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:19-34, CSB)

Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT): Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30, NLT)

John 6:28-29 (NLT): They replied, “We want to perform God’s works, too. What should we do?”

Jesus told them, “This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.”

(John 6:28-29, NLT)

John 13:33-35 (NLT): “Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you can’t come where I am going. So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” (John 13:33-35, NLT)

John 15:1-17 (NLT): "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³ You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

⁵ "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. ⁷ But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! ⁸ When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

⁹ "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. ¹⁰ When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! ¹² This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. ¹³ There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. ¹⁶ You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other."

(John 15:1-17, NLT)

Romans 8:1-11 (CSB): Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, ² because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ What the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering, ⁴ in order that the law's requirement would be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit have their minds set on the things of the Spirit.

⁶ Now the mind-set of the flesh is death, but the mind-set of the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The mind-set of the flesh is hostile to God because it does not submit to God's law. Indeed, it is unable to do so. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him. ¹⁰ Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through his Spirit who lives in you. (Romans 8:1-11, CSB)

Philippians 2:1-11 (NLT): Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? ² Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.

³ Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

⁵ You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

⁶ Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.

⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:1-11, NLT)

E.G. White References

Desire of Ages, page 480: Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only one for whom the Saviour died. The distress of every one touches His heart. The cry for aid reaches His ear. He came to draw all men unto Himself. He bids them, "Follow Me," and His Spirit moves upon their hearts to draw them to come to Him. Many refuse to be drawn. Jesus knows who they are. He also knows who gladly hear His call, and are ready to come under His pastoral care. He says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." He cares for each one as if there were not another on the face of the earth.

"He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out And the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice." The Eastern shepherd does not drive his sheep. He depends not upon force or fear; but going before, he calls them. They know his voice, and obey the call. So does the Saviour-Shepherd with His sheep. The Scripture says, "Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." Through the prophet, Jesus declares, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." He compels none to follow Him. "I drew them," He says, "with cords of a man, with bands of love." Psalm 77:20; Jeremiah 31:3; Hosea 11:4.

It is not the fear of punishment, or the hope of everlasting reward, that leads the disciples of Christ to follow Him. They behold the Saviour's matchless love, revealed throughout His pilgrimage on earth, from the manger of Bethlehem to Calvary's cross, and the sight of Him attracts, it softens and subdues the soul. Love awakens in the heart of the beholders. They hear His voice, and they follow Him. (Desire of Ages, page 480)

Desire of Ages, pages 667-668: The Lord is disappointed when His people place a low estimate upon themselves. He desires His chosen heritage to value themselves according to the price He has placed upon them. God wanted them, else He would not have sent His Son on such an expensive errand to redeem them. He has a use for them, and He is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name. They may expect large things if they have faith in His promises.

But to pray in Christ's name means much. It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works. The Saviour's promise is given on condition. "If ye love Me," He says, "keep My commandments." He saves men, not in sin, but from sin; and those who love Him will show their love by obedience.

All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.

As Christ lived the law in humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the Strong for strength. But we are not to place the responsibility of our duty upon others, and wait for them to tell us what to do. We cannot depend for counsel upon humanity. The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised. Whatever was given to Christ – the "all things" to supply the need of fallen men – was given to Him as the head and representative of humanity. And "whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." 1 John 3:22. ([Desire of Ages, pages 667-668](#))

Steps to Christ, pages 62-63: The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been – just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents – perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any condition short of this, then the happiness of the whole universe would be imperiled. The way would be open for sin, with all its train of woe and misery, to be immortalized.

It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to

meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." [Galatians 2:20](#). So Jesus said to His disciples, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." [Matthew 10:20](#). Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works – works of righteousness, obedience.

So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us. ([Steps to Christ, pages 62-63](#))