

A Deeper Experience

DAY 6—THE GIFT OF REPENTANCE

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1 Pet. 5:6).

Mr. G was a respected teacher at a small boarding academy in the rolling hills of Eastern Washington in the United States. This school taught not only the principles of reading, writing, math, and vocational skills but also the fundamentals of practical Christian living. Students learned to give Bible studies, preach evangelistic meetings, and lead out in their home churches by teaching the Sabbath School lesson, preaching the sermon, and doing community outreach. Mr. G was a vital part of that education.

Mr. G taught from the book *Steps to Christ* for his eleventh-grade Bible class. He used practical methods to impress on his students’ minds the simplicity of the gospel, and his burden was that they would grasp the principles of how to walk with Jesus and abide in Him daily. His life was a testimony to the power of God, and he stressed upon the minds of his students the importance of starting the day with Christ. “Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee’” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 70).

Mr. G taught not only upper grade Bible class but also carpentry to ninth-grade boys. The class was divided into two sections. First, they studied a book; next, they applied what they had learned in a practical way. One day during class, Mr. G was helping three of the boys build a supporting wall, while the other three played on a pile of lumber. Mr. G asked the boys to stay off the lumber since it could fall and injure someone. The boys continued to wrestle on the wood, and when he went over to talk with them, a large plank fell on his foot. He danced around in pain, clutching his foot. The boys, thinking this was very funny, laughed and pointed at him. Instantly, Mr. G became angry. Heated words flowed from his lips. Like Moses, who lost his temper with the children of Israel, he lost his temper in front of his students.

Running into a nearby office, Mr. G cried out to God, “I blew it, Lord! I can’t teach anymore!” Quietly, the tender mercy and compassion of Jesus comforted his heart, bringing repentance. “Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, [Satan] too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. . . . Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you” (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 71, 72).

While he was praying, the thought came to him, “You can’t stay in this office all day; you must go and tell those boys that you misrepresented Me by your actions.” Humbled, he returned to the boys, who were standing outside and blamed themselves for his outburst. “I did not represent Jesus to you today, and I’m sorry,” he apologized. The boys tried to comfort him saying “It’s OK! Everyone does it. It’s normal!”

The next class period for Mr. G that day was Bible. He had assigned his students to read the fifth chapter in *Steps to Christ*, “Consecration,” and write down a thought that impressed them. As he entered his classroom, he didn’t feel emotionally prepared to teach. The students came in and took their seats, and one of the girls put her assignment on his desk. Mr. G glanced down, and his eyes caught one sentence: “Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 70). That one sentence was just what he needed.

Years later, he received a letter from one of those boys. “I know that you weren’t proud of your actions that day in carpentry class,” the letter read. “But I want you to know that your example of humbling yourself and making things right, apologizing to us, spoke volumes to my heart. Now that I am a father, I have had to ask my children many times to forgive me for when I failed, and because of your example, it has helped me be a better father.”

“We shall often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because of our shortcomings and mistakes, but we are not to be discouraged. Even if we are overcome by the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No; Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 64).

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You for our Advocate, Jesus Christ, who intercedes on our behalf.
- We praise You because You can turn our defeat into victory.
- We praise You, Lord, that even if we do fall, we are not cast down and forsaken.

Confession

- Lord, please show us the areas in our lives that need Your softening and refining Spirit.
- Forgive us for when we lose our patience with others and speak angry or hasty words.
- Please give us Your strength to apologize when we have mistreated others.

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, we ask You to give us Your spirit of peace when we are confronted with irritations.
- We pray for the 8,208 Adventist schools with almost 2 million students. May these schools always teach Bible truth and lead young people into mission and service.
- Lord, give us wisdom to reach secular cultures that have no interest in religion. Let Your Holy Spirit break down the walls that surround secular hearts.
- We pray for the unreached people groups in Asia, including Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus. Many have never heard the name of Jesus. Give us special wisdom for meeting their needs.
- Bless us as we reach out to people enslaved by spirit worship, idolatry, and animistic beliefs. Help us to understand their worldview and introduce them to a personal Savior.
- Lord, please inspire Seventh-day Adventists around the world to pray as never before. Let us plead together for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. We ask You for the promised fulfillment of Joel 2, Hosea 6, and Acts 2.
- We pray for the 541 people groups in the 18 countries of Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. Please lead them to biblical truth.
- Show us how to meet the practical and spiritual needs of refugees. May our church be known for our love of all people, no matter who they are or where they come from.
- May we faithfully and fully proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. May we center all our teachings on the love and righteousness of Christ.
- We also pray for our list of seven or more people [name the names if appropriate].

Thanksgiving

- Thank You, Lord, that You are able to keep us from falling (Jude 24).
- Thank You for repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
- We thank You for the example of service that Christ left us. Please give us the strength to follow His pattern.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

“Just When I Need Him” (SDA Hymnal #512); “I Must Tell Jesus” (SDA Hymnal #485); “Whiter Than Snow” (SDA Hymnal #318)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- “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).
- “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” (1 John 2:1).