

## Seeking Revival

### DAY 2—RECEIVING THE GIFT

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**“May you know how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is.” EPHESIANS 3:18**

#### **Receive, Surrender, Grow**

How can we experience God’s full love? Read what the apostle Paul says in Ephesians 3:14-21.

1. First, we need to receive the Holy Spirit. "I pray that he will use his glorious riches to make you strong. May his Holy Spirit give you his power deep down inside you" (verse 16).
2. Next, we surrender (give in to Jesus) our lives to Christ and live in a close, continued relationship (ties) with Him "so that Christ will live in your hearts because you believe in him" (verse 17).
3. Then our faith grows and matures (grows fully) through Christ and the Holy Spirit in us. We have "deep roots and are established in love" (verse 17).

The result? We experience the God's full love. He gives us the power "together with all the Lord's holy people to understand Christ's love. May you know how wide and long and high and deep it is" (verse 18).

#### **God's Love Passes Every Test**

Think about the parable of the Lost Son in Luke 15:11-32. One day the younger son went to his father (who represents God) and said that he wanted to leave home and live his own life. This son did not want to follow his father's household rules (God's commandments). The son demanded his inheritance, which was not his yet, so the father gave him his share. The father gave the son all freedom because he loved him and respected his choice (just as God does with us).

Then the son traveled to a far place and spent his money on wild parties and women. As his money decreased, his circle of "friends" became smaller, until he had nothing left. Worse, a famine hit the area where he lived. Worried about how he could live, he looked for work, but the only job he found was taking care of pigs. He was hungry, but he was not even allowed (permitted) to eat the pig food.

While suffering, the son began to think about his life. He thought about all of his father's workmen that had enough to eat while he was starving, so he decided to return to his father and say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven. And I have sinned against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants" (verses 18, 19).

The son started to travel home with mixed feelings, but his father was already watching for him. Full of love and sympathy, the father ran forward, hugged and kissed him, even though the son must have been dirty and smelly. Before the son could finish his confession (admitting his wrongs), the father called servants to bring the best clothes and prepare a feast. Clearly he loved his son the same as before. In this story we see the full story of salvation—the repentance (being sorry for sins) and confession of the sinner, the Father who waits lovingly, and the happy welcome when we come back to God. God loves us unconditionally with no limits! But we need to go to Him, the same as the son went back to his father. The love of God passes every test! He will not fail to welcome you.

Only when the son returned could the father show his full love. Only then was the son open to receiving all the love that his father wanted to give him. Then nothing stopped their close relationship, and the son could learn the full goodness of his father, who never stopped waiting for him to come back home.

Again to the question—how can we experience God’s full love? By living in full, daily surrender to Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. When God’s love fills our lives, we show His love to others; the more we give, the more we receive. Ellen White says, “You need a daily renewal of the love that in the days of the apostles made them all of live in harmony together” (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8, p. 191)

Why is it so important to understand God’s love? “Paul saw that Jesus’ character needs to be understood before people could love Him or accept salvation with faith. We must begin to study Jesus’s character here on Earth which we will continue to study and praise through all eternity” (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 273). What a joy to study the perfect love of our Savior! Will you choose today to look to Jesus?

### **Praying God's Word**

#### **What is the greatest commandment?**

“Jesus said to him, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind.’ . . . And the second is like it. ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself’” (Matthew 22:37, 39).

*Father God, thank You for loving me. Please help me to love You with all my heart, all my life, all my emotions, all my strength. Thank You for already answering my prayer the way you know is best. I want to love my neighbor with Your help. Help me to show Your love.*

#### **How can we understand the depths of God's love?**

“I pray that [God] will use his glorious riches to make you strong. May his Holy Spirit give you His power deep down inside you. Then Christ will live in your hearts because you believe in Him. And I pray that your love will have deep roots. I pray that it will have a strong foundation. May you have power together with all the Lord’s holy people to understand Christ’s love. May you know how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ” (Ephesians 3:16-18).

*Father God, I ask You to give me strength inside and out through Your Holy Spirit. May Christ live in me through faith and lead me so I can have deep roots in His love. Since my prayer is according to Your will, I thank You for hearing me and answering.*

### **More Prayer Suggestions**

**Thanks and Praise:** Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

**Confession:** Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

**Guidance:** Ask God to give wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

**Our Church:** Ask God to bless the work of our local, regional, and world church.

**Local Requests:** Pray for the needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

**Listen and Respond:** Take time to listen for God’s voice and respond in praise or song.

### **Song Suggestions**

SDA Hymnal: Faith Is the Victory (#608); My Faith Looks Up to Thee (#517); Be Thou My Vision (#547); To God Be the Glory (#341). Other Songs: Behold What Manner of Love; Lord, I Lift Your Name on High; I Love You, Lord.