

ETHAN TEMPLE MINISTRIES
TOOLS FOR LIFE
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ABIDING IN CHRIST AND SERVICE

Service for the Lord can become a heavy burden at times, filled with anxiety and stress, before the Christian comes to understand and experience true abiding in Christ and His abiding in him. However, once the mystery of union with Christ is experienced, everything changes. Service for the Master is a joy, and the stress and burdens are relieved.

Ellen White wrote of the great peace Jesus had when He ministered on earth. Describing His response during the storm that threatened His disciples and Him, she wrote:

“When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. But He rested not in the possession of almighty power. It was not as the ‘Master of earth and sea and sky’ that He reposed in quiet. That power He had laid down, and He says, ‘I can of Mine own self do nothing.’ John 5:30. He trusted in the Father's might. It was in faith—faith in God's love and care—that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 336).

She goes on to challenge us to trust our Lord in the same manner:

“As Jesus rested by faith in the Father's care, so we are to rest in the care of our Saviour. If the disciples had trusted in Him, they would have been kept in peace. Their fear in the time of danger revealed their unbelief. In their efforts to save themselves, they forgot Jesus; and it was only when, in despair of self-dependence, they turned to Him that He could give them help.

“How often the disciples’ experience is ours! When the tempests of temptation gather, and the fierce lightnings flash, and the waves sweep over us, we battle with the storm alone, forgetting that there is One who can help us. We trust to our own strength till our hope is lost, and we are ready to perish. Then we remember Jesus, and if we call upon Him to save

us, we shall not cry in vain. Though He sorrowfully reproves our unbelief and self-confidence, He never fails to give us the help we need. Whether on the land or on the sea, if we have the Saviour in our hearts, there is no need of fear. Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life, and will deliver us from danger in the way that He knows to be best” (*Ibid*).

When we are truly experiencing abiding in Christ and He abiding in us, His presence is a reality. Our resting in Him will then become real, not just a theory, and it will be consistent. All fear, worry, and stress in service or life will be gone. The burdens of ministry will be lifted replaced with our resting in Jesus’ presence. As Ellen White says We must despair of self-dependency and turn to Christ.

When we are abiding in Christ, we will have the relationship with Him that He had with His Father, which enabled Him to rest in the assurance that the Father would speak and minister through Him.

“Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works” (John 14:10).

Personal Reflection and Discussion

If you are fearful or overstressed in your service for the Lord, what does that indicate about you?

Was it unreasonable for the disciples to be fearful when they were in the boat in the storm? Why, or why not?

How do you usually react when trials, temptations, and difficulties come into your life?

How does God want you to react in difficult and trying situations?

How do you plan to apply the lesson of this devotional study to your life this week?

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