

When the first disciples after Pentecost spoke enthusiastically about Jesus, some people believed and it was great! At the same time, the disciples were confronted with great opposition: (Acts 5:18-21) They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. 19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. 20 “Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people all about this new life.” 21 At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.

What happened next? Of course. Again, they are imprisoned, interrogated and this time also beaten. Yet, at the end of that chapter it says: (Acts 5:42) The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah. Does this seem normal to you? After everything they suffered, they again go and talk about Jesus publicly and from house to house. Are you surprised that at that time there was a huge revival in Jerusalem, which then spread to the wider area?

It is said that one of the keys to awakening is prayer. That is a great truth! Let’s pray a lot more! The second essential key to revival is the disciples’ initiative in sharing living Jesus with unbelieving people! Without effective sharing of the Good News, no movement will happen simply by itself! The Master himself started it, he constantly went to people, asked them questions, talked with them and served them in various ways. He did not wait for someone to approach him, ask him, invite him, visit him. Initiative means that disciples purposefully go out to people where those people are. They connect with people there, they share living Jesus, they share their own experience with Him and at the same time the Good News and the challenge that those other people can also accept Jesus and experience that inner beauty! Then, when they have to run away in order to preserve their lives, they address anyone anywhere – outside of the temple, on a personal level: (Acts 8:4) *Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.*

Have you ever encountered opposition to your „faith“ or to your ministry to non-Christians? From unbelievers we usually expect more of this resistance than it occurs today! And have

you ever encountered opposition from Christians? One leader in the church complained: „Andrew is pulling out of the ministry.“ Andrew’s new regular Discovery with five non-believers took off to a great start! Therefore, he did not have the capacity for some other kinds ministry in the church. It took them a while to explain that Andrew’s contacts with non-believers were an important ministry to God’s kingdom. For many people, the initiative is not automatic, but many are happy to join. That is the secret of leadership that I discuss in this section!

Initiative means

- to actively enter into contact with people and connect with them where they are, share the most important News and ideally start a new community with them – both with acquaintances and gradually with strangers!
- Initiative means starting something no one else around is doing.
- Initiative means to endure or overcome some resistance when necessary!

I wonder how we became proactive ourselves?

- I see „experiential“ contact with Jesus as the first source of initiative. By this I mean that our life with Him must be practical, not just intellectual “faith“. It is a connection with Jesus in the form of perceiving His closeness, His guidance, His empowerment.
- This certainly includes the fact that we saw the transforming action of Jesus in the people we reached out to!
- As for the sources of initiative, I cannot omit God’s Word and also
- personal contact with those who directly participated in the start of the movement somewhere!
- Some of them became our mentors. They encouraged us and corrected in our initial attempts.
- Our team played a significant role in our initiative. Together we struggled, tried, searched. When an activity, tool, or approach didn’t produce the expected fruit, we prayerfully tested others. And we had the courage to simply stop dysfunctional things.

In addition to many prayers, the movement is all about initiative! Someone has to start and be persistent enough to reach to others. Initiative is the initial or minimal role of leadership!



## H09. Initiative As a Key to a Movement

Informal and formal also!

*Lord Jesus, thank you for your initiative to come to us first. Even when we were not looking for You, You drew us to you by Your love.*