

“Calling Upon Jesus in Our Urgent Need!”

Week 1 - 100 Days of Prayer

March 27 – April 2, 2020

“Peace in the Midst of a Pandemic”

By Mark A. Finley

The figures are skyrocketing. A raging pandemic, coronavirus or COVID-19, is traveling with lightening speed across the globe. But there is another plague that is racing even faster. It has infected more people than those afflicted with the coronavirus. As serious as the coronavirus is, and it is serious, there is something else that is deadlier—fear. Fear, anxiety, and worry impact our immune systems, strangle our joy, and rob us of hope.

How can we be kept from being consumed by worry and anxiety? What can help us from being overcome by crippling fear? Or it might be more accurate to say who can deliver us from our paralyzing fears? Jesus speaks of our time in Luke 21 when He predicts: “Men’s hearts failing them for fear for the things coming upon the earth.” The next passage says, “Then they will see the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen look up, lift your heads, for your redemption draws nigh” (Luke 21:26-28).

Whether we are consumed with fear or filled with hope all depends where we are looking. If you are looking at natural disasters; if you are consumed with bad news; if pestilences and disease occupy your thoughts; if that’s where you are focused, your heart is going to be filled with fear. Jesus says, “Look up!” Why? When we look to Heaven’s sanctuary, we see Jesus and discover strength in His promises.

In Christ we find confidence. In Christ we experience assurance. In Christ we are lifted above life’s uncertainties and concerns and our hearts are filled with security in the One who loves us with an everlasting, undying, unfathomable, exhaustless, endless love. In Christ we are delivered from our crippling fears. At times we may experience the emotion of fear, but we will not be paralyzed by fear because our confidence in God triumphs over our fear.

Here is another encouraging statement from *Signs of the Times*, October 9, 1901. It is a comment on Jesus’ statement in Luke 21. “Men’s hearts are failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth. But those who believe in God will hear His voice amid the storm, saying, “It is I; be not afraid.”

Here is an additional wonderful statement from the book *Evangelism*, p. 65: “In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with, but let us not forget that the three great powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His purposes to pass.”

The Bible says “do not fear” or “fear not” repeatedly. Although I have not personally counted the number of times the Bible uses this expression, one author has counted 365 times that an expression like “fear not” is used throughout the Bible – that is one for every day of the year. God has the entire calendar year covered. He invites us to rest in His love, trust in His grace, and rejoice in His power.

In one of the Bible’s most reassuring promises, Isaiah encourages us, echoing the words of our Lord: “Fear not for I am with you.” Why don't we fear? Jesus is with us. Whatever we must go through, He is by our side. “Fear not for I am with you. Be not dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isa. 41:10). Our faith clings to the promises of God’s Word. Our light shines in the darkness of this world. The current COVID-19 pandemic can be a catalyst to lead us to a deeper relationship with God, a greater faith, and a richer prayer experience. In times of crisis our faith is in Him. Our trust is in Him. He is our security, our assurance, our strength, and our hope. May this current pandemic be a clarion call to repentance, revival, and reformation. May it be a time that we cling to His promise that a better tomorrow is coming!

*Mark Finley is assistant to the General Conference president. We encourage you to read our featured book of the week by Mark Finley titled **Revive Us Again**.*

HEART QUESTIONS: In the midst of a world filled with chaos, where do we find our security and where do we put our faith? Is it in science or in what the medical professionals say? Is it in our job security or our relationships, or is it in Jesus and the promises of His Word? If Jesus truly is the foundation of our faith, how will the urgency and focus of our daily prayers change during the crisis we are facing?

ACTIVE HEART CHALLENGE: Before Jesus returns, we must come to find our entire dependence and hope in Him. Let’s start praying today that He will give us His peace, strengthen our faith in His Word, and fill us with the Holy Spirit so we can work effectively for Him, even in the midst of this crisis. Let’s begin claiming the promises of 2 Chron. 7:14, Luke 11:13, and Zech. 10:1 as we pray daily for a deeper filling of the Holy Spirit and for healing for our land.

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God’s promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 621

Going Deeper - Additional Reading Suggestions for this week:

- Ellen White, “The Last Crisis,” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 11-18
- Mark Finley, *Revive Us Again*



Day 1 – Prayer Focus – Friday, March 27, 2020

1. Pray for God’s church to stand strong in the midst of the great COVID-19 health crisis facing our world. Pray for our many health professionals, doctors, nurses, and others working around the clock to save lives.
2. Pray for our church members especially in Italy, France, Spain, Germany, as these are the hardest hit regions of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe.
3. Pray for church members and health care workers in New York City, one of the hardest hit regions in the United States.
4. Pray that the coronavirus pandemic would stop spreading, and that God would hear the cries of His people and heal our land.
5. Pray that in the midst of the chaos, Christians worldwide would sense the nearness of Jesus’ soon return and press the heavenly throne in prayer pleading for the Holy Spirit.



Day 2 – Prayer Focus - Sabbath, March 28, 2020

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27

“The enemy can never take out of the hand of the Christian the one who is simply trusting in His promises.” *Review and Herald*, Feb. 3, 1903

1. Pray that fear would be replaced with peace, and that we as a people would stand strong in the midst of chaos, trusting that God is in control.
2. Pray for those who are struggling with the Coronavirus or who have lost loved ones in this pandemic. Pray for hope and comfort in the midst of the pain.
3. Pray for church members in Kenya, and other African countries, who are struggling because their open-air markets are closing.
4. Pray for literature evangelists, preachers, teachers, Bible workers, and others who may not be able to carry on the same face-to-face ministry as before. Pray for divine wisdom and ideas for new ways to minister.
5. Pray for the churches that have been closed because of the virus. Pray that congregations will find ways to stay “together” through internet live-streaming and witnessing in appropriate “social distancing” ways.



Day 3 – Prayer Focus - Sunday, March 29, 2020

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.” Ps. 139:23, 24

“There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church.... Every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted, “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6). *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 124

1. Pray that we would take David’s prayer in Psalm 139 personally, asking the Lord if there is anything standing between Him and us. If the Holy Spirit reveals something, pray that we would confess and make things right with God or others.
2. Pray that we would live in faith, not fear, no matter the circumstances around us.
3. Pray for provision for those who are losing jobs, getting laid off, or wondering where their next meal will come from if they can’t go to work. Pray that God would sustain and provide for their daily needs as He promises to do in Isa. 33:16 and Phil. 4:19.
4. Pray that church members worldwide would understand that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a prophetic movement with a prophetic message entrusted by heaven with a very special prophetic mission, and now is the time to shine for God’s glory.
5. Pray that all church leaders and members everywhere would see this pause in meetings and agendas as an opportunity to cultivate a deeper personal walk with Jesus.



Day 4 – Prayer Focus - Monday, March 30, 2020

“You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not come near you.” Ps. 91:6-7

“Faith grows strong by coming into conflict with doubts and opposing influences. The experience gained in these trials is of more value than the most costly jewels.”
Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 555

1. Pray that God would fulfill the promises of Psalm 91 and put a hedge around His children, protecting them from the coronavirus plague overtaking our world.
2. Pray that this world crisis would be a turning point in church history, and that people’s eyes would be opened to the nearness of Jesus’ soon coming.

3. Pray for those living in cramped quarters in large cities, that they will find creative ways to stay healthy and connected with others. Pray especially for the children who are stuck indoors.
4. Pray for wisdom for the many decisions facing our worldwide church leadership right now. Pray for divine wisdom for these challenging times.
5. Pray for wisdom for our government and world leaders during these difficult times. Pray that there would be a genuine seeking after God among top leaders and government officials.



Day 5 – Prayer Focus - Tuesday, March 31, 2020

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

Luke 11:13

“The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it.”

The Review and Herald, March 19, 1895.

1. Pray for those who have been newly diagnosed with COVID-19. Pray for wisdom for treatment methods to take.
2. Pray for Adventist church members to be foremost in modeling healthy lifestyle practices and natural ways to boost the immune system like eating lots of fruits and vegetables, taking hot and cold contrast showers, and opening the windows to breathe in fresh air.
3. Pray for us as a church to know how to effectively use and share our health message, the “right arm of the gospel,” with online health education, videos, and other creative avenues of outreach.
4. Pray that rather than using this extended time at home to binge on secular entertainment, we would use this time to study God’s Word, to pray, and to read books and watch videos that will grow our faith.
5. Pray for churches worldwide to develop plans to keep church members connected during times of isolation.



Day 6 – Prayer Focus - Wednesday, April 1, 2020

“As for me, I will call upon God, and the LORD shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice. He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle that was against me, for there were many against me.” Ps. 55:16-18

“When the church awakes to the sense of her holy calling, many more fervent and effective prayers will ascend to heaven for the Holy Spirit to point out the work and duty of God’s people regarding the salvation of souls. We have a standing promise that God will draw near to every seeking soul.” *1 Selected Messages*, p. 116

1. Pray for our grandparents, parents, and the elderly to have strength and health in the midst of this worldwide crisis.
2. Pray for our health professionals, doctors, nurses, and others who are continuing to work around the clock to care for the mounting coronavirus cases. Pray for their personal health and safety.
3. Pray that the Three Angel’s Messages would move forward even more powerfully in the parts of the world where large events and outreach programs have been canceled, as all eyes turn heavenward.
4. Pray for the Mission to the Cities initiatives in numerous locations throughout the World Church. Pray that the seeds that have been sown will now reap fruit for God’s kingdom.
5. Pray for wisdom, patience and grace in dealing with all the multiple changes taking place in daily living so that people can cope and, beyond that, be faithful witnesses to God’s all-powerful leading in their lives.



Day 7 – Prayer Focus - Thursday, April 2, 2020

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you and you shall glorify Me.” Ps. 50:15

“Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His experience testifies to the power of importunate prayer. It is now that we are to learn this lesson of prevailing prayer, of unyielding faith. The greatest victories to the church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or the favor of men. They are those victories that are gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest, agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power.”

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 203

1. Pray that we will continue to look to God in faith, trusting Him with the uncertainties of our future, knowing that He is in control. Pray that we would trust God’s Word even when circumstances all around us seem dark and discouraging.
2. Pray for wisdom for church leaders and administrators as they work through logistical challenges in the re-scheduled General Conference Session, which will now take place May 20-25, 2021, in Indianapolis.
3. Pray that the General Conference session of 2021 will be filled with spiritual, mission-focused plans and that the Holy Spirit will be in full control.

4. Pray for the theme of the 2021 General Conference Session: “Jesus Is Coming! Get Involved!” Pray that members worldwide would even now take this call for Total Member Involvement personally.
5. Pray for a great Holy Spirit outpouring on God’s church members worldwide, wherever they are, that the work can be finished and we can go home.

Additional Resource to Build your Walk with God from

Ellen White, "The Last Crisis," *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 11-18

Chapter 1—The Last Crisis

We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. {9T 11.1}

The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones. {9T 11.2}

The condition of things in the world shows that troublous times are right upon us. The daily papers are full of indications of a terrible conflict in the near future. Bold robberies are of frequent occurrence. Strikes are common. Thefts and murders are committed on every hand. Men possessed of demons are taking the lives of men, women, and little children. Men have become infatuated with vice, and every species of evil prevails. {9T 11.3}

The enemy has succeeded in perverting justice and in filling men's hearts with the desire for selfish gain. "Justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." Isaiah 59:14. In the great cities there are multitudes living in poverty and wretchedness, well-nigh destitute of food, shelter, and clothing; while in the same cities are those who have more than heart could wish, who live luxuriously, spending their money on richly furnished houses, on personal adornment, or worse still, upon the gratification of sensual appetites, upon liquor, tobacco, and other things that destroy the powers of the brain, unbalance the mind, and debase the soul. The cries of starving humanity are coming up before God, while by every species of oppression and extortion men are piling up colossal fortunes. {9T 11.4}

On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: "How can we best glorify God?" The Lord was not in their thoughts. {9T 12.1}

I thought: "Oh, that those who are thus investing their means could see their course as God sees it! They are piling up magnificent buildings, but how foolish in the sight of the Ruler of the universe is their planning and devising. They are not studying with all the powers of heart and mind how they may glorify God. They have lost sight of this, the first duty of man." {9T 12.2}

As these lofty buildings went up, the owners rejoiced with ambitious pride that they had money to use in gratifying self and provoking the envy of their neighbors. Much of the money that they thus invested had been obtained through exaction, through grinding down the poor. They forgot that in heaven an account of every business transaction is kept; every unjust deal, every fraudulent act, is there recorded. The time is coming when in their fraud and insolence men will reach a point that the Lord will not permit them to pass, and they will learn that there is a limit to the forbearance of Jehovah. {9T 12.3}

The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fire-proof buildings and said: "They are perfectly safe." But these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines. {9T 13.1}

I am instructed that when the Lord's time comes, should no change have taken place in the hearts of proud, ambitious human beings, men will find that the hand that had been strong to save will be strong to destroy. No earthly power can stay the hand of God. No material can be used in the erection of buildings that will preserve them from destruction when God's appointed time comes to send retribution on men for their disregard of His law and for their selfish ambition. {9T 13.2}

There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problem of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis. If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's word, they would find a solution of the problems that perplex them. {9T 13.3}

The Scriptures describe the condition of the world just before Christ's second coming. Of the men who by robbery and extortion are amassing great riches, it is written: "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." James 5:3-6. {9T 13.4}

But who reads the warnings given by the fast-fulfilling signs of the times? What impression is made upon worldlings? What change is seen in their attitude? No more than was seen in the attitude of the inhabitants of the Noachian world. Absorbed in worldly business and pleasure, the antediluvians "knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away." Matthew 24:39. They had heaven-sent warnings, but they refused to listen. And today the world, utterly regardless of the warning voice of God, is hurrying on to eternal ruin. {9T 14.1}

The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. {9T 14.2}

"Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.... Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the

curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate.... The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth." Isaiah 24:1-8. {9T 14.3}

"Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.... The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down, for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate." "The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men." Joel 1:15-18, 12. {9T 15.1}

"I am pained at my very heart; ... I cannot hold my peace, because thou has heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled." Jeremiah 4:19, 20. {9T 15.2}

"I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down." Verses 23-26. {9T 15.3}

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jeremiah 30:7. {9T 15.4}

Not all in this world have taken sides with the enemy against God. Not all have become disloyal. There are a faithful few who are true to God; for John writes: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. Soon the battle will be waged fiercely between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. Soon everything that can be shaken will be shaken, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain. {9T 15.5}

Satan is a diligent Bible student. He knows that his time is short, and he seeks at every point to counterwork the work of the Lord upon this earth. It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth. And Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God's people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought. God's tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in Exodus 31:12-18. They are to take their stand on the living word: "It is written." This is the only foundation upon which they can stand securely. Those who have broken their covenant with God will in that day be without God and without hope. {9T 16.1}

The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment, since this is the sign of God's creative power and the witness to His claim upon man's reverence and homage. The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator's memorial and to exalt the institution of Rome. In the issue of the

conflict all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel all, "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God will not receive it. Revelation 13:16. The prophet of Patmos beholds "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God," and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Revelation 15:2. {9T 16.2}

Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming,—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation,—God's chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them. {9T 17.1}

God's word to His people is: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters." "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18; 1 Peter 2:9. God's people are to be distinguished as a people who serve Him fully, wholeheartedly, taking no honor to themselves, and remembering that by a most solemn covenant they have bound themselves to serve the Lord and Him only. {9T 17.2}

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:12-17. {9T 17.3}

Do not these words point us out as God's denominated people? and do they not declare to us that so long as time shall last, we are to cherish the sacred, denominational distinction placed upon us? The children of Israel were to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations "for a perpetual covenant." The Sabbath has lost none of its meaning. It is still the sign between God and His people, and it will be so forever. {9T 18.1}