

“Calling Upon Jesus in Our Urgent Need!”

Week 3 - 100 Days of Prayer

April 10 - 16, 2020

“An Unexpected Miracle”

By James L. Black, Sr.

“Have you ever seen anything like this?” This becomes a common question when people witness something they have never seen before. No doubt the name “COVID-19” will go down in history as one of the world’s greatest pandemics.

It is amazing how quickly life can change overnight. The word of God reminds us that disasters will come, and we should always be prepared and dependent upon the Lord. This world crisis has ripped the core out of the economy; overwhelmed medical systems; left many in greater poverty; left many homeless and jobless; left many with permanent illnesses; and yes, it has claimed the lives of tens of thousands.

Many are praying for a miracle. Many are pleading with God to change their situation and protect them from the deadly virus. But the question is, are we prepared for the kind of miracles God performs?

I have no doubt that God will hear and come through for everyone who prays to Him. While He comes through in different ways and in His own time, these promises give me hope. *“No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you” (Joshua 1:5), and “It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear” (Isaiah 65:24).*

Several years ago, I developed a bone marrow disease called Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS), a depletion of the body’s red blood cells. If left untreated, MDS leads to Acute leukemia or death. I was at stage 4 of the disease, and my only hope was a successful bone marrow (stem cell) transplant. Thousands around the world were praying for my survival and recovery at a time when I was too weak to sincerely pray for myself. Yes, I can testify that God came through for me, but not in the expected way, for God’s miracles are about eternal life.

Three things happened that revealed the Lord to me in ways I had not experienced before. First, due to circumstances beyond my control, my transplant process was delayed for nine months even though I was at stage 4 of the disease. This delay provided the opportunity for aggressive wholistic, natural treatments that strengthened my body and better prepared me for the transplant. Second, my daughter (my stem cell donor) and I were able to bond prior to the transplant, leading to an incredible moment of forgiveness. The third was what it did for me and my wife. For the first time in our marriage, I was on my back in the hospital, with a life threatening disease, in isolation, and with chronic

fatigue. I was too weak to bathe, so on three or four occasions my wife Maxine had to bathe me. At first I was angry, but when I saw her gentleness and total commitment as she showered me from head to toe, I realized that God was preparing me for a special miracle of healing.

My special miracle is found in these words of Jesus: "When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven you.'" Yes, the miracle in my greatest time of need was that God healed me before the transplant. By the grace of God, I walked out of the hospital a new creature in Jesus and healed of a spiritual and physical disease.

Today, I encourage you to take your eyes off of COVID-19 and anything else that may be distracting you, and like the four friends who brought the paralytic to Jesus, tear off the roof, come before Jesus and let Him heal your soul.

"It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24).

Pastor James L. Black, Sr. most recently served 17 years in the North American Division as the youth/young adult ministries director. He is currently director for the North American Division Prayer Ministries.

HEART QUESTIONS: While we know that it is always God's will to heal His children, we don't always know His will regarding timing. Some He might choose to heal immediately, others gradually, while others He may not heal until the second coming (James 5). Can we trust God and His timing? Can we hold on in faith even when we don't always see immediate answers to our prayers? How can we grow our faith and trust in God and His Word?

ACTIVE HEART CHALLENGE: This week, as we continue to pray for the sick, for the medical professionals, and for God to stop the spread of the Coronavirus around the world, let's pray that a love for God and His Word would spread. Let's open our Bibles with new enthusiasm and pray, "Lord, show us how to know You and love You! Show us how to experience true healing from the inside out. Show us what it means to study and understand Your Word. And show us how to share Your Word with others." As we pray, let's claim Isa. 55:8-11, 2 Tim. 2:15, and 1 Pet. 3:15.

"How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You." Ps. 119:9-11

Going Deeper - Additional Reading Suggestions for this week:

- Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, "Scriptures as a Safeguard," chapter 37
- Frank M. Hasel/Michael G. Hasel, *How to Interpret Scripture*, Companion book to Adult Sabbath School Study Guide for 2nd Quarter



Day 15 – Prayer Focus – Friday, April 10, 2020

PRAISE REPORT! It appears that the spread of the pandemic is starting to slow down a little in Spain and Italy. We praise God that there is hope for improvement.

- Pray that God would stop the spread of COVID19 in the countries of the world with high concentrated populations. Pray especially for the Lord's intervention in India, Bangladesh, the continent of Africa, and some countries throughout Asia that are just beginning to battle the COVID-19 pandemic in full force.
- Pray for medical researchers to find treatments that cure the Coronavirus as we don't have months to wait for the development of a vaccine.
- Pray for God's protection for children, for the weak, and vulnerable, who are forced to stay home with abusive family members or who live in difficult foster homes.
- Pray for provision for food and meals for children that can no longer attend school where food was regularly provided.
- Pray that we would learn to study God's Word on a deeper level, and also share His Word in practical ways with those around us.



Day 16 – Prayer Focus - Sabbath, April 11, 2020

Teach us to Pray!

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Jer. 33:3

“We have come to serious times. Events in our world call upon every follower of Christ to be totally in earnest in our relationship with God. To strengthen this relationship and satisfy our emotional and spiritual needs, we must learn the power of prayer. We must plead with the Lord, like the disciples of old, saying, ‘Lord, teach us to pray.’ ”

Prayer, p. 1

Heart Questions:

We may be part of 100 Days of Prayer, and we may be praying with our small prayer groups, but have we really learned what it means to pray? Have we ever earnestly cried out like the disciples cried to Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray?” If you haven't done this, why don't you ask the Lord today, “Please teach me to pray!”

PRAISE REPORT: Although Indianapolis had to cancel the large evangelistic meetings planned pre-GC session, now John Bradshaw is planning to do a series of meetings online which we believe will have much greater reach. We expect tens of thousands of people to attend. Once again, what the enemy has meant for evil, God is turning around for good.

- Pray that we as church would ask God to send the Holy Spirit and teach us how to pray in a way that we will receive answers.
- Pray the online evangelistic series that John Bradshaw and *It is Written* is planning. Pray that many people will tune in and that many will make decisions for Jesus.

- Pray for medical professionals and hospitals in your area that are struggling with a shortage of medical supplies. Pray that God would provide what is needed so our health professionals can stay safe.
- Pray that more people could help making masks and other protective equipment, and that the needed beds, ventilators, and health facilities would be opened to accommodate the surge in medical care needed.
- Pray for the Chinese ministry in Cebu City in the Philippines. Pray for protection from the Coronavirus for the church there and that more Chinese people will take an active interest in the study of the Scriptures.



Day 17 – Prayer Focus - Sunday, April 12, 2020

The Greatest Victories

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

“The greatest victories gained for the cause of God are not the result of labored argument, ample facilities, wide influence, or abundance of means; they are gained in the audience chamber with God, when with earnest, agonizing faith men lay hold upon the mighty arm of power.” *Gospel Workers*, p. 259

Heart Questions:

Since we know that we gain our greatest victories through prayer and time in God’s Word, why are we so hesitant to take the time to pray and study the Bible? What activities or distractions are getting in the way of your personal communion with God?

PRAISE REPORT: In the Queensland city of Toowoomba (population 130,000), there are two churches, Toowoomba Central and Glenvale. Pastor Casey Wolverton is the pastor of the Glenvale Church. When the COVID19 virus hit and churches were closed, on the first Sabbath, they conducted the worship service as normal but with no one in the pews and broadcast it on Facebook or Youtube and 900 people viewed the service. The local radio station heard what the Adventists were doing, so the radio station approached the Adventist Church asking if they could record the Adventist service and broadcast it the next day (Sunday) to an audience of 130,000 people. Without the COVID10 crisis it is very unlikely that this would have happened. Praise God!

- Pray that special messages of hope can continue to be broadcasted throughout the city of Toowoomba in Queensland Australia. Pray for church members throughout Australia, that they can find ways to continue to be a light to those around them.
- Pray for our many Literature Evangelists around the world that can no longer go door to door. Pray for God to open up new ways for these dedicated workers to share the truth. And pray that God would provide for their needs.

- Pray for hospitals across the United States who are expecting to have their most difficult week yet in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Pray for God to intervene.
- Pray for the elderly, the immune-compromised, and other high-risk members in your local church. Pray that God's protecting hand would be around them.
- Pray for those who have already lost loved ones because of this Coronavirus outbreak. Pray for courage and strength for those experiencing loss to hold on to God.



Day 18 – Prayer Focus - Monday, April 13, 2020

Looking Beyond what is Seen

“Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’ ” John 20:29

“Often the Christian life is beset with dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before, and bondage and death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly, Go forward. Let us obey the command, even though our sight cannot penetrate the darkness. The obstacles that hinder our progress will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit. Those who defer obedience till every uncertainty disappears, and there remains no risk of failure or defeat, will never obey. Faith looks beyond the difficulties, and lays hold of the unseen, even Omnipotence, therefore it cannot be baffled. Faith is the clasping of the hand of Christ in every emergency.” *Gospel Workers*, p. 262

Heart Questions:

It is easy to believe what we see, but what about the things we cannot see? What are ways that we can grow our faith in God's Word, even though we have not yet seen its fulfillment? We are told Faith is a gift. Based on Ephesians 2:8 and Acts 3:16, where do we get this amazing gift?

PRAISE REPORT: In Papua New Guinea outside evangelists, pastors, and lay preachers can no longer travel into the country, due to COVID-19 travel bans, for the previously scheduled Total Member Involvement event that was suppose to take place this May. However, the local people in Papua New Guinea had already been rallying together this past year holding tens of thousands of Bible studies, and initiating thousands of local meetings held by lay people and pastors. And they are already making plans for another big evangelistic thrust to follow after the current COVID-19 pandemic has passed. Again, what the enemy has meant for evil, God is turning to even greater good.

- Pray for God's protection over the people and country of Papua New Guinea and also for God's leading in decision making for the PNG Government and its health professionals as they battle COVID-19.

- Pray that what God does in Papua New Guinea through the local church members would be even more successful than the original plans that were made. Pray that there will be no tribal fighting as plans are made to move forward.
- Pray for believers who are incarcerated in different prisons around the world. Pray for strength to witness to fellow inmates during this crisis.
- Pray for a small bakery and mission center in Jönköping, Sweden to reach even more people, so that many will come know Jesus and accept Him as their Savior. Pray for more Bible study contacts and conversions.
- Pray also for the local churches throughout Sweden, which are small and composed of mostly elderly people. Pray that God would bring more young people into the churches in Scandinavia, and that He would protect these small congregations during this COVID-19 pandemic.



Day 19 – Prayer Focus - Tuesday, April 14, 2020

Look Up to Jesus!

“My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct it to You,
And I will look up.” Ps. 5:3

“Summon all your powers to look up, not down at your difficulties; then you will never faint by the way. You will soon see Jesus behind the cloud, reaching out His hand to help you; and all you have to do is to give Him your hand in simple faith and let Him lead you. As you become trustful you will, through faith in Jesus, become hopeful. The light shining from the cross of Calvary will reveal to you God’s estimate of the soul, and, appreciating that estimate, you will seek to reflect the light to the world. A great name among men is as letters traced in sand, but a spotless character will endure to all eternity.”

Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 578

Heart Questions:

What is the first thing that you do each morning? Do you look at the news, your e-mails or social media? Do you start thinking about all your problems? Or do you look up to Jesus?

As you go through today, make a new commitment to look to Jesus instead of looking down on your trials. Look to Jesus for hope instead of turning to the secular world for encouragement.

PRAISE REPORT: In the last thirty days, over a hundred thousand resources have been downloaded from www.revivalandreformation.org. We praise the Lord that many people are recognizing their spiritual need and seeking to grow in their walk with God. We also praise the Lord that thousands of prayer groups are starting all around the world as a result of this COVID-19 crisis.

- Pray for church members throughout Germany, France, Spain, Italy, and Belgium. These hot spot areas are still struggling to curtail the virus. Pray for healing for those who have experienced loss.
- Pray for church members throughout the Middle East, especially in Iran and Israel. Pray for those that are living cramped up in tiny compartments with little fresh air and no ability to get exercise.
- Pray for your neighbors who may not know Jesus. Pray for ways to share the hope of Jesus with them, maybe through “cell phone” evangelism or other helpful online resources.
- Pray for those in your own church or community who are fighting COVID-19 right now. Pray for God’s healing hand to be upon them.
- Pray that we would all be faithful stewards and return our tithe. Even though times are difficult the Bible tells us that those who honor God, He will honor (1 Sam. 2:30).



Day 20 – Prayer Focus - Wednesday, April 15, 2020

God is Faithful!

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.” 1 Cor. 10:13

“The enemy dare not go one hairbreadth beyond his appointed sphere. There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God. Christ is our tower of strength, and Satan can have no power over the soul that walks with God in humility of mind. The promise, “Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.” In Christ there is perfect and complete help for every tempted soul. Dangers beset every path, but the whole universe of heaven is standing on guard, that none may be tempted above that which he is able to bear.” *My Life Today*, p. 316

Heart Questions:

Do you feel like you are dealing with more than you can bear? God promises He won’t give us more than we can bear, so if you feel overwhelmed claim the promise of 1 Cor. 10:13. Claim the promise of Phil. 4:13, and Ps. 61:2. Comfort yourself today in the promises of God’s Word.

PRAISE REPORT: Across Europe (and probably many places around the world), young people that haven’t been going to church are getting active in online Bible study groups. We praise the Lord for this increased interest in God and His Word!

- Pray that even more of our youth would be interested in learning to study their Bibles. Pray that there would be a great revival among our youth.
- Pray for our youth around the world, who are participating in their own 100 Days of Prayer led out by the General Conference Youth Department and Children Ministries department. Pray that our youth and young people would learn that when we pray God hears and answers prayer.
- Pray for teachers as they struggle to teach classes online. Pray that God would give them wisdom how to utilize technology in away that is beneficial for all. Pray for wisdom and patience.
- Pray for those that are broken, for those that have recently lost loved ones, and for those struggling in isolation to feel that God is still near.
- Pray for endurance for doctors, nurses, and health professionals that are on the front lines battling the COVID-19 pandemic.



Day 21 – Prayer Focus - Thursday, April 16, 2020

Let's Talk Faith

“Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven
With the saving strength of His right hand. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.” Ps. 20:6-7

“Take the word of Christ as your assurance. Has He not invited you to come unto Him?
Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much.
By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give
evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. Talk and act as if your faith was invincible. The Lord is
rich in resources; He owns the world. Look heavenward in faith. Look to Him who has light
and power and efficiency.” *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 146

Heart Questions:

What does it mean to talk and act in faith? If our faith is weak, how do we grow stronger faith? (See Romans 10:17). Share with someone today an experience where God grew your faith, or tell someone a testimony about an answered prayer.

PRAISE REPORT: We praise the Lord for the health message that He has given us, that enables us to be stronger to fight off sickness and disease. We praise the Lord for the many ways that He's enabling us to share this health message with others.

- Pray that God would continue to help us become a people of strong faith, for we know much more difficult trials lie ahead.
- Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon God's people so that the work can be finished and we can go home.

- Pray for wisdom for pastors and administrators as they seek to comfort and encourage and lead in the midst of chaos.
- Pray that we as a people would do our best to live the health principles we've been taught that our body can have strong immune systems.
- Pray that God's love would so fill us, so move us, so break our hearts afresh, that we could not contain it, but would share it with those who have no hope.