

Experiencing God Through Prayer, Praise, and His Word

Resources Compiled by Jerry and Janet Page

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Materials compiled by Jerry and Janet Page.

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Knowing and Experiencing Our God

God has a passionate desire to have an intimate love relationship with us. This is the most amazing reality in this universe. Jesus prayed to His Father just before He risked everything, giving up even His own life for us, “this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” John 17:3. The great apostle Paul said, “I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection...” Phil 3:8,10.

We have often struggled like most of you over the years in knowing how to have this close love relationship with our Lord. The materials in this compilation are some of the most helpful, practical counsels and deep insights we have found over the years to strengthen us and many others in this exciting life with Jesus!

The Book of Acts shares story after story of the amazing miracles of God, as the first Christians let Him totally lead in their lives. He led them into spiritual activities which changed them, and then the world. They gathered for earnest prayer, studying the Scriptures, self-examination, repentance, and confession, leading to a holy unity. It resulted in real humility, joyful praise and thanksgiving, and a clear focus on witnessing and Jesus’ mission. The Holy Spirit came upon them, and the results were unbelievable! As we approach the Second Coming of Jesus, we need that same upper room experience in our lives and churches today! We need the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit’s power (Acts 1:8)

We hope that in these resources you may find help and encouragement in your walk with Jesus. However, we do not want you to think that there is some “right” way to pray or do all of these activities and become overwhelmed, feeling you will never do it right or be good enough at prayer and praise.

We love these statements in Steps to Christ: “Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.” (SC, p.93); “Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him [...] His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them [...] The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.” (SC, p.100)

Spend time with our Lord daily, asking Him to guide you into the disciplines and understandings you need most along your spiritual journey. Then enjoy Him as we get ready to be with Him forever!

We pray that the Lord will continue to guide you daily as you abide in him. We claim for you this promise of Jesus in John 15:7: “If you abide in Me and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified that you bear much fruit, so you will be my disciple.”

Jerry and Janet Page

CALL TO ME AND I WILL ANSWER

Examples of What the Bible says about Prayer

1. "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." (Jer. 33:3)
2. "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." (1 John 5:14-15)
3. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6)
4. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thess. 5:16-18)
5. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (John 15:7)
6. "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. 8:26)
7. "He shall regard the prayer of the destitute, and shall not despise their prayer." (Ps. 102:17)
8. "The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth." (Ps. 145:18)
9. "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19-20)
10. "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." (James 5:13-16)
11. "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. [...] 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!" (Lk 11:9-10,13)
12. "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation." (Matt. 26:41)
13. "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." (Mark 11:24)

EMPOWERED BY PRAYER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Two requirements for life-changing ministry are 1) Much personal and united prayer and 2) becoming individually involved. Let God's Word and these inspired quotes guide your efforts to reach people for Jesus.

1. "What the Lord did for His people in that time [early church], it is just as essential, and more so, that He do for His people today. **All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do.** And we are to work with as much more fervor, to be accompanied by the Holy Spirit in as much greater measure, as the increase of wickedness demands a more decided call to repentance." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 33)
2. **"A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work.** . . . Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessings. **A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer.**" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 121)
3. "At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles." (1T, p. 346)
4. "It is part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask." (*The Great Controversy*, p. 525)
5. "It is in the order of God that those who bear responsibilities should often meet together to counsel with one another, and to pray earnestly for that wisdom which He alone can impart. **Unitedly** make known your troubles to God. **Talk less;** much precious time is lost in talk that brings no light. **Let brethren unite in fasting and prayer** for the wisdom that God has promised to supply liberally." (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 499)
6. "'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matthew 18:19, 20). 'Ask of Me, and I will answer your requests.' **"The promise is made on condition that the united prayers of the church are offered, and in answer to these prayers there may be expected a power greater than that which comes in answer to private prayer.** The power given will be proportionate to the unity of the members and their love for God and for one another." (*Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 18, letter 32, 1903)
7. **"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)
8. "The word of the living God is not merely written, but spoken. The Bible is God's voice speaking to us, just as surely as though we could hear it with our ears. If we realized this, with what awe would we open God's Word, and with what earnestness would we search its precepts! The reading and contemplation of the Scriptures would be regarded as an **audience with the Infinite One.**" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 393)
9. "An intensity, such as never before was seen, is taking possession of the world. In amusement, in moneymaking, in the contest for power, in the very struggle for existence, there is a terrible force

that engrosses body and mind and soul. In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking. He bids us come apart and commune with Him. **'Be still, and know that I am God'** (Ps. 46:10).

"Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine Teacher. With their burdens they return to their work.

"These workers can never attain the highest success until they learn the secret of strength. They must give themselves time to think, to pray, to wait upon God for a renewal of physical, mental, and spiritual power. They need the uplifting influence of His Spirit. Receiving this, they will be quickened by fresh life. The wearied frame and tired brain will be refreshed, the burdened heart will be lightened.

"Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need." (*Education*, pp. 260, 261)

10. "Parents have a great and responsible work to do, and they may well inquire: 'Who is sufficient for these things?' But God has promised to give wisdom to those that ask in faith, and He will do just as He said He would. **He is pleased with the faith that takes Him at His Word.** The mother of Augustine prayed for her son's conversion. She saw no evidence that the Spirit of God was impressing his heart, but she was not discouraged. She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God His own words, and pleaded as only a mother can. **Her deep humiliation, her earnest importunities, her unwavering faith, prevailed, and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart. Today He is just as ready to listen to the petitions of His people.** His 'hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear;' and if Christian parents seek Him earnestly, **He will fill their mouths with arguments, and for His name's sake will work mightily in their behalf in the conversion of their children."** (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 322, 323)
11. "When the mind dwells upon self, it is turned away from Christ, the source of strength and life. **Hence, it is Satan's constant effort to keep the attention diverted from the Savior and thus prevent the union and communion of the soul with Christ.** The pleasures of the world, life's cares and perplexities and sorrows, the faults of others, or your own faults and imperfections—to any or all of these he will seek to divert the mind. Do not be misled by his devices. Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, he too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved. All this turns the soul away from the source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. **Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him."** (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 71, 72)
12. "There is no influence in our land more powerful to poison the imagination, to destroy religious impressions, and to blunt the relish for the tranquil pleasures and sober realities of life, than theatrical amusements. The love for these scenes increases with every indulgence, as the desire for intoxicating drink strengthens with its use. The only safe course is to shun the theater . . . and every other questionable place of amusement." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 653)
13. "The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort. Those who achieve the greatest results are those who rely most implicitly upon the Almighty Arm. . . . **The men of prayer are the men of power."** (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 509)

Please visit www.revivalandreformation.org for additional resources.

ANCHORED IN SCRIPTURE

God's Word Is Life and Power

1. "The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." (Ps. 119:130)
2. "I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life." (Ps. 119:93)
3. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1)
4. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)
5. "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63)
6. "For You have magnified Your word above all Your name." (Ps. 138:2)
7. "He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. . . . And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. 19:13, 16)
8. "My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh." (Prov. 4:20-22)
9. "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. . . . I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:3, 5)
10. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (John 15:7)
11. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Col. 3:16)
12. "For all the promises of God in him are yes, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." (2 Cor. 1:20)
13. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4)
14. "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." (Heb. 4:12)
15. "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." (James 1:22)
16. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

GOD'S PROMISES GIVE LIFE AND POWER

*The Bible overflows with God's "exceedingly great and precious promises" (2 Pet. 1:4).
May these quotes inspire you to open His Word and claim it as your very own.*

1. "Every promise in the Word of God is for us. In your prayers, present the pledged word of Jehovah and by faith claim His promises. His word is the assurance that if you ask in faith, you will receive all spiritual blessings. Continue to ask, and you will receive exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think. **Educate yourself to have unlimited confidence in God.** Cast all your care upon Him. Wait patiently for Him, and He will bring it to pass." (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 71)
2. "The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. **Every command is a promise;** accepted by the will, received into the soul, **it brings with it the life of the Infinite One.** It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God." (*Education*, p. 126)
3. "In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 39)
4. "Receive into the soul by faith the incorruptible seed of the word, and it will bring forth a character and a life after the similitude of the character and the life of God." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 39)
5. "all His biddings are enablings". (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 333)
6. "We are to come to God, not in a spirit of self-justification, but with humility, repenting of our sins. He is able to help us, willing to do for us more than we ask or think. He has the abundance of heaven wherewith to supply our necessities. . . . God is holy, and we must pray, 'lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting' (1 Tim. 2:8)." (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 71)
7. "For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, **for any gift that He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received.** We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realized when we need it most." (*Education*, p. 258)
8. "God stands back of every promise He has made." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147)
9. "Can you not trust in your heavenly Father? Can you not rest upon His gracious promise? . . . Can we not have implicit trust, knowing that He is faithful who hath promised? I entreat you to let your trembling faith again grasp the promises of God. **Bear your whole weight upon them with unwavering faith; for they will not, they cannot, fail.**" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 497)
10. "Let these blessed promises, set in the framework of faith, be placed in memory's halls. Not one of them will fail. All that God hath spoken He will do. 'He is faithful that promised.'" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 630)

11. "How I wish that we might all believe in the promises of God. . . . We are not to look into our hearts for a joyful emotion as an evidence of our acceptance with Heaven, but we are to take God's promises and say, 'They are mine. The Lord is letting His Holy Spirit rest upon me. I am receiving the light; for the promise is, "Believe that ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.'" By faith I reach within the veil and lay hold of Christ, my strength. I thank God that I have a Savior.'" (*Signs of the Times*, Mar. 25, 1889).
12. "Think of Christ. Look to Him in faith, believing His promises. Keep your mind trustful. He will be your stay. Lean on Him, depend on Him. . . . Put your trust in One whose arm will never fail you. . . . looking to Jesus you will find encouragement." (*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 265)
13. "Instead of thinking of your discouragements, think of the power you can claim in Christ's name. . . . Let your thoughts be directed to the evidences of the great love of God for you. Faith can endure trial, resist temptation, and bear up under disappointment. Jesus lives as our advocate. All is ours that His mediation secures. . . . **All experiences and circumstances are God's workmen whereby good is brought to us.**" (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 488, 489)
14. "The enemy never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises." (*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 351)
15. "The children of God may rejoice in all things and at all times. When troubles and difficulties come, believing in the wise providence of God, you may rejoice. **You need not wait for a happy flight of feelings, but by faith you may lay hold of the promises and lift up a hymn of thanksgiving to God.**" (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 123)
16. "There are many who, though striving to obey God's commandments, have little peace or joy. This lack in their experience is the result of a failure to exercise faith. They walk, as it were, in a salt land, a parched wilderness. They claim little, when they might claim much; for there is no limit to the promises of God. Such ones do not correctly represent the sanctification that comes through obedience to the truth. The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Through the exercise of faith the believer comes into possession of these blessings. Through faith, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed." (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 200)
17. "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)
18. "Those who are unwilling to forsake every sin and to seek earnestly for God's blessing, will not obtain it. But all who will lay hold of God's promises as did Jacob, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. 'Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily' (Luke 18:7, 8)." (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 203)
19. "It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from the tree which is 'for the healing of the nations' (Revelation 22:2). Received, assimilated, they are to be the strength of the character, the inspiration and sustenance of the life. Nothing else can have such healing power. Nothing besides can impart the courage and faith which give vital energy to the whole being." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 122)

20. "We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises. **Angels record every prayer that is earnest and sincere.** We should rather dispense with selfish gratifications than neglect communion with God. The deepest poverty, the greatest self-denial, with His approval, is better than riches, honors, ease, and friendship without it." (*The Great Controversy*, p. 622)
21. "By what means did He overcome in the conflict with Satan? By the word of God. Only by the word could He resist temptation. 'It is written,' He said. . . . Every promise in God's word is ours. 'By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God' are we to live. **When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the Word. All its strength is yours.** 'Thy word,' says the psalmist, 'have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.' 'By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer' (Psalm 119:11; 17:4)." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 123)
22. "Should you sit always in one position, without moving, your muscles would become strengthless and your limbs would lose the power of motion. The same is true in regard to your religious experience. You must have faith in the promises of God. . . . Faith will perfect itself in exercise and activity." (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 104)
23. [Referring to faith as a grain of mustard seed] "If you have faith like this, you will lay hold upon God's Word, and upon all the helpful agencies He has appointed. Thus your faith will strengthen, and will bring to your aid the power of heaven. The obstacles that are piled by Satan across your path, though apparently as insurmountable as the eternal hills, shall disappear before the demand of faith. 'Nothing shall be impossible unto you.'" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 431)
24. "The mother of Augustine prayed for her son's conversion. **She saw no evidence that the Spirit of God was impressing his heart, but she was not discouraged.** She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God His own words, and pleaded as only a mother can. Her deep humiliation, her earnest importunities, her unwavering faith, prevailed, and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart. Today He is just as ready to listen to the petitions of His people. 'His hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear;' and if Christian parents seek Him earnestly, He will fill their mouths with arguments, and for His name's sake will **work mightily in their behalf in the conversion of their children.**" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 322, 323)
25. "Those who bring their petitions to God, claiming His promise while they do not comply with the conditions, insult Jehovah." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 143)
26. "True faith lays hold of and claims the promised blessing before it is realized and felt." (*Early Writings*, p. 72)
27. "We have too little faith. We limit the Holy One of Israel. We should be grateful that God condescends to use any of us as His instruments. For every earnest prayer put up in faith for anything, answers will be returned. They may not come just as we have expected; but they will come, not perhaps as we have devised, but at the very time when we most need them. But, oh, how sinful is our unbelief! 'If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you'" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 209)

SEIZE THE POWER OF PRAISE

Do you long for more joy and less sorrow in your personal life? The Apostle Paul reminds Christians, "Pray much for others; plead for God's mercy upon them; give thanks for all He is going to do for them" (1 Tim. 2:1, TLB). Praise Him today for what He is going to do in the future!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Psalm 34:1-3

"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together."

Psalm 105:1-3

Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord!

Cultivate Gratitude and Praise

1 Chronicles 16:8-36

"When the ten lepers were healed, only one returned to find Jesus and give Him glory. Let us not be like the unthinking nine, whose hearts were untouched by the mercy of God." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 315)

"Let us educate our hearts and lips to speak the praise of God for His matchless love." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253)

Develop a plan for "educating" your heart and lips to praise God. (see Dan. 6:10)

Claim the Power of Praise

2 Chronicles 20:1-30

"Begin to educate your tongues to praise Him, and train your hearts to make melody to God; and when the evil one begins to settle his gloom about you, sing praise to God. When things go crossways at your homes, strike up a song about the matchless charms of the Son of God, and I tell you, when you touch this strain, Satan will leave you." (*Review and Herald*, Aug. 5, 1890)

"Unbelievers are often convicted as they listen to pure words of praise and gratitude to God." (*Messages to Young People*, p. 424)

About praising God for our blessings: "No more effective means can be employed for winning souls to Christ." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 300)

"Let there be singing in the home, of songs that are sweet and pure, and there will be fewer words of censure and more of cheerfulness and hope and joy. Let there be singing in the school, and the pupils will be drawn closer to God, to their teachers, and to one another." (*Education*, p. 168)

Enjoy the Benefits of Praise

Prov. 17:27; Psalm 103:2

“No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 251)

Some of the benefits of praise:

Banishment of discouragement (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 254)

Steady increase of courage, hope, and faith (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 202)

Far more power in prayer (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317)

Greater realization of God’s love (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317)

Health of body and soul promoted (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 251)

What Can You Praise God For?

Lamentations 3:22, 23

“The thought that Christ died to obtain for us the gift of everlasting life, is enough to call forth from our hearts the most sincere and fervent gratitude, and from our lips the most enthusiastic praise.” (*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 238)

“The greatness of this gift [God’s Son] was to furnish men with a theme of thanksgiving and praise that would last through time and through eternity.” (*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 243)

“Let us praise God for an opportunity to live for the glory of His name. Let the fresh blessings of each new day awaken praise in our hearts for these tokens of His loving care. When you open your eyes in the morning, thank God that He has kept you through the night. Thank Him for His peace in your heart. Morning, noon, and night, let gratitude as a sweet perfume ascend to heaven.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253)

More blessings to praise Him for:

God’s goodness and mercies (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 461)

God’s peace in our hearts (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253)

The protection given by angels (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 63)

The water we drink is purchased by Christ’s blood (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 660)

The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf of bread (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 660)

Temporal blessings and comforts (*Child Guidance*, p. 148)

The matchless charms of Christ (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 593)

God’s acceptance of the humble (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 370)

The second coming of Jesus (*Evangelism*, p. 218)

BENEFITS OF PRAISING GOD

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!" (Ps. 150:6). Here's how praise can change your life.

Praise increases faith, hope, and courage. "If more praising of God were engaged in now, hope and courage and faith would steadily increase." (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 202)

Praise increases our power in prayer. "We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317)

Praise increases our love for God. "If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise. . . . We would abound more and more in the love of God." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317)

Praise results in greater blessings being bestowed. "If the loving kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would. . . . have more bestowed to praise Him for." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317)

Praise increases our power in witnessing. "Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. After a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, our joy in the Lord and our efficiency in His service would be greatly increased by recounting His goodness and His wonderful works in behalf of His children. . . . Such a testimony will have an influence upon others. No more effective means can be employed for winning souls to Christ." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 299, 300)

Praise promotes health. "Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 251)

Praise brings us nearer to heaven. "The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. God is worshiped with song and music in the courts above, and as we express our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 104)

PRAISE GOD IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

King David praised God while hiding in a cave. Paul and Silas sang while locked up in prison. In spite of difficult surroundings, we always have a choice. Choose praise! "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:16-18).

1. "The soul may ascend nearer Heaven on the wings of praise." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 104)
2. "In the future life the mysteries that here have annoyed and disappointed us will be made plain. We shall see that **our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings.**" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 474)
3. "The way of the Lord's helping we may not know; but this we do know: He will never fail those who put their trust in Him." (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 576)
4. "Could Christians realize how many times the Lord has ordered their way, that the purposes of the enemy concerning them might not be accomplished, they would not stumble along complainingly. Their faith would be stayed on God, and **no trial would have power to move them.**" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 576)
5. "**The fact that we are called upon to endure trial shows that the Lord Jesus sees in us something precious which He desires to develop.** If He saw in us nothing whereby He might glorify His name, He would not spend time in refining us. He does not cast worthless stones into His furnace. It is valuable ore that He refines." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 471)
6. "All that has perplexed us in the providences of God will in the world to come be made plain. The things hard to be understood will then find explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken promises, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. We shall know that infinite love ordered the experiences that seemed most trying." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 286)
7. "**Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing.** Those who accept the one principle of making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish and a plain path before their feet." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 481)
8. "To all who are reaching out to feel the guiding hand of God, **the moment of greatest discouragement is the time when divine help is nearest.** They will look back with thankfulness upon the darkest part of their way. 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly' (2 Peter 2:9). From every temptation and every trial He will bring them forth with firmer faith and a richer experience." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 528)
9. "The Father's presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ. Whatever comes to him comes from the Savior, who surrounds him with His presence. Nothing can touch him except by the Lord's permission. All our sufferings and sorrows, all our temptations and trials, all our sadness and griefs, all our persecutions and privations, in short, all things work together for our good. **All experiences and circumstances are God's workmen whereby good is brought to us.**" (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 488, 489)

10. "Moses had a deep sense of the personal presence of God. . . . The presence of God was sufficient to carry him through the most trying situations in which a man could be placed. Moses did not merely think of God; he saw Him. God was the constant vision before him; he never lost sight of His face. He saw Jesus as his Savior, and he believed that the Savior's merits would be imputed to him. This faith was to Moses no guesswork; it was a reality. This is the kind of faith we need, faith that will endure the test. Oh, how often we yield to temptation because we do not keep our eye upon Jesus! Our faith is not continuous because, through self-indulgence, we sin, and then we cannot endure 'as seeing Him who is invisible.' My brother, make Christ your daily, hourly companion, and you will not complain that you have no faith. **Contemplate Christ. View His character. Talk of Him. The less you exalt self, the more you will see in Jesus to exalt.** God has a work for you to do. Keep the Lord ever before you." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 651, 652)

BLESSINGS TO PRAISE GOD FOR

*Pray and praise your way through God's Word!
Claim each promise and trust Him to do what He says He will do.*

FOR FORGIVENESS

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He will forgive and cleanse.
Matt. 11:28-30 Bring Jesus your burdens.
John 6:37 Whoever comes to Christ will not be cast out.
1 Tim. 1:15 Christ came to save sinners.
Luke 19:10 Christ came to seek and to save the lost.
Rom. 8:1 No condemnation for those who are in Christ.
Isa. 1:18 Sins are made white as snow.
Isa. 38:17 He casts our sins behind His back.
Isa. 44:22 God sweeps away your transgressions.

FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Phil. 4:19 God will supply your every need.
Matt. 6:33 Seek God's kingdom first, and He will care for your needs.
2 Cor. 9:6 He who sows bountifully will reap bountifully.
1 Cor. 10:13 God will not allow you to be tempted beyond your strength.
Rom. 8:32 We have "all things" in Christ.
Jude 24 He can keep you from falling.
2 Cor. 12:9 God's grace is sufficient for you.
Phil. 4:7 The peace of God will keep your hearts and minds.
Isa. 26:3 God keeps in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on Him.

FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

Luke 11:13 We can receive the Holy Spirit.
John 14:26 The Holy Spirit teaches us and brings things to our remembrance.
John 16:8 He convicts of sin.
John 15:26 He testifies of Christ.
John 16:7 He comes as the Counselor.
Eph. 3:16 He strengthens you.
Rom. 8:26 Helps in our weakness and intercedes for us.

FOR CHRISTLIKENESS

2 Cor. 5:17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation and the old is gone.
Ezek. 36:26, 27 God promises to give you a new heart and new spirit.
2 Cor. 6:16 God will dwell in you.
Eph. 3:16, 17 Christ will dwell in your heart through the Holy Spirit.
2 Pet. 1:4 Through Christ's promises you can partake of the divine nature.
2 Cor. 10:4, 5 Every thought can be made captive to Christ.
2 Cor. 3:18 By beholding the Lord we are changed into His likeness.
Phil. 1:6 God will complete the work He began in you.

FOR WISDOM AND STRENGTH

James 1:5, 6 Wisdom will be given when you ask in faith.
Prov. 3:5, 6 Rely on God for guidance.
Ps. 32:8 God will teach you the way to go.
Ex. 33:14 God's presence will go with you and give you rest.
Isa. 58:11 He will guide you continually.
Phil. 4:13 I can do all things in Christ.
Jer. 1:7 He will give you words to speak.
Prov. 14:26 In the fear of the Lord you can have strong confidence.
Isa. 41:10 God will strengthen, God will help, God will uphold.
Isa. 41:13 The Lord your God will hold your right hand.
Heb. 4:15, 16 Come with confidence to the throne of grace.
James 4:7, 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.
James 5:14, 15 The prayer of faith will save the sick and sins will be forgiven.
James 5:16-18 Prayer has great power.
1 Pet. 5:7 Cast all your anxieties on Him.
1 John 5:14, 15 You can know He hears when you ask anything according to His will.

FOR OTHERS

Ezek. 11:19, 20 God promises to give people a new heart that they may keep His laws and be His people.

1 John 5:16 God promises to give spiritual life to those for whom you pray.

John 12:32 Christ uplifted on the cross draws people to Him.

Acts 5:31 Repentance and forgiveness are gifts from God.

John 16:8 The Holy Spirit convicts of sin.

Heb. 4:12 God's Word is living and powerful and reaches the heart.

Jer. 32:40 I will put my fear in their hearts so they will not depart from me.

Jer. 33:3 If we call, God will answer with great things.

Isa. 49:24, 25 God promises to deliver those who are captives of Satan.

ALL-INCLUSIVE

Ps. 34:10 If you seek the Lord, you will not lack any good thing.

Ps. 37:3-5 Delight in the Lord, commit your way to Him, and He will act.

Ps. 84:11 God will withhold no good thing from you if you walk uprightly.

Eph. 3:20 He can do more than we ask.

Luke 1:37 With God, nothing is impossible.

Mark 11:24 Believe and you will receive.

Rom. 8:28 In everything God works for the good of those who love Him.

John 16:24 Ask in His name and receive.

John 15:7 If you abide in Christ, ask what you will, and it shall be done.

John 15:16 Anything you ask in Christ's name the Father will give to you.

Luke 11:9 Ask and it will be given.

Matt. 28:20 I am with you always.

*"All His biddings are enablings" (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 333).
 God never asks us to do anything without giving us the power to do it.
 Therefore, every command in the Bible is also a promise!*

HOW TO BEGIN ABIDING IN JESUS' LOVE

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" John 15:5.

1. Dedicate the first hour of each day to making yourself emotionally available to Jesus. Determine to open the door of your heart every day until Jesus comes.
2. Use the Gospel of John, *The Desire of Ages*, the Psalms, any of Ellen White's devotional books, Andrew Murray's book *Abide in Christ*, or another book of your choice.
3. Have no agenda (such as reading through the Bible, studying for a presentation, or finishing a book) except to experience His love.
4. Pray: "Lord, my mind knows You love me. Now I want to know Your love with my heart. Possess me, embrace me, overwhelm me with Your love, and live in me. Thank You for loving me!"
5. Spend unhurried time in God's presence: pray, read, listen, write, pray, read, listen, write.
6. At the slightest emotional experience of His love, thank Him and praise Him. By expressing this faith, your awareness of Him will increase joyfully.

SEVEN DAILY ESSENTIALS FOR ABIDING IN CHRIST

“But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life” (John 4:14).

1. Take time (first thing in the morning) to be with God alone.
2. Listen through the Word and through two-way prayer.
3. Understand your need. Humble yourself until you see that without Jesus, you will do nothing but harm.
4. Ask for:
 - His life to replace yours.
 - His specific traits to manifest in you (name the traits the Spirit convicts you about).
 - His will to replace yours (this is surrender of the will).
 - His life through the Spirit to remain in you all day—replacing your thoughts and feelings with His.
 - His love to be a witness through you—spontaneously drawing others to Himself.
5. Believe He is doing all that you ask. Express your faith (so it will grow strong) by giving thanks for what you cannot see.
6. Live in Jesus’ love by talking with Him all day long about everything, remembering to continually praise Him for every blessing, large and small, and thanking Him for His love.
7. Live victoriously by enjoying His love and specifically allowing Him to replace the will of the flesh with the will of the Spirit when you are aware of a conflict.

Created by Dale Leamon

THE JOYS OF BEING DEAD

Most struggles result not from our circumstances but from our own selfishness.

How do we break free? Only by dying to selfish desires and inviting Jesus to live in our hearts.

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20).

1. "It is the love of self that destroys our peace. While self is all alive, we stand ready continually to guard it from mortification and insult; but when we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall not take neglects or slights to heart. We shall be deaf to reproach and blind to scorn and insult." (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 16)
2. "Those who are dead to self will not feel so readily and will not be prepared to resist everything which may irritate. Dead men cannot feel. You are not dead. If you were, and your life were hid in Christ, a thousand things which you now notice, and which afflict you, would be passed by as unworthy of notice; you would then be grasping the eternal and would be above the petty trials of this life." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 425)
3. **"There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God.** All who consecrate body, soul, and spirit to His service will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical, mental, and spiritual power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own Spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in mind and heart. Through the grace given us we may achieve victories that because of our own erroneous and preconceived opinions, our defects of character, our smallness of faith, have seemed impossible." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 159)
4. "We cannot afford to let our spirits chafe over any real or supposed wrong done to ourselves. Self is the enemy we most need to fear. No form of vice has a more baleful effect upon the character than has human passion not under the control of the Holy Spirit. **No other victory we can gain will be so precious as the victory gained over self.**" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 485)
5. **"If pride and selfishness were laid aside, five minutes would remove most difficulties."** (*Early Writings*, p. 119)
6. "In the heart of Christ, where reigned perfect harmony with God, there was perfect peace. He was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment. . . . It is the love of self that brings unrest." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330)
7. "The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. Self did not die, and therefore they did not rise to newness of life in Christ." (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, p. 51)
8. **"There is nothing so offensive to God or so dangerous to the human soul as pride and self-sufficiency.** Of all sins it is the most hopeless, the most incurable." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 154)
9. "Jesus emptied Himself, and in all that He did, self did not appear. He subordinated all things to the will of His Father. . . . And He bids us, 'Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.' 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself' (Matt. 11:29; 16:24); let self be dethroned and no longer hold the supremacy of the soul. . . . The independence and self-supremacy in which we glory are

seen in their true vileness as tokens of servitude to Satan. Human nature is ever struggling for expression, ready for contest; but he who learns of Christ is emptied of self, of pride, of love of supremacy, and there is silence in the soul. Self is yielded to the disposal of the Holy Spirit. Then we are not anxious to have the highest place. We have no ambition to crowd and elbow ourselves into notice; but we feel that **our highest place is at the feet of our Savior.**" (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 14, 15)

10. "The drunkard is despised and is told that his sin will exclude him from heaven; while pride, selfishness, and covetousness too often go unrebuked. But these are sins that are especially offensive to God; for they are contrary to the benevolence of His character, to that unselfish love which is the very atmosphere of the unfallen universe. He who falls into some of the grosser sins may feel a sense of his shame and poverty and his need of the grace of Christ; but pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ and the infinite blessings He came to give." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 30)
11. **"If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one.** But, though professing to be converted, we carry around with us a bundle of self that we regard as altogether too precious to be given up. It is our privilege to lay this burden at the feet of Christ and in its place take the character and similitude of Christ. The Savior is waiting for us to do this." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, pp. 189, 190)
12. "When the mind dwells upon self, it is turned away from Christ, the source of strength and life. Hence it is Satan's constant effort to keep the attention diverted from the Savior and thus prevent the union and communion of the soul with Christ. The pleasures of the world, life's cares and perplexities and sorrows, the faults of others, or your own faults and imperfections—to any or all of these he will seek to divert the mind. Do not be misled by his devices. Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, he too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. **We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved.** All this turns the soul away from the Source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. **Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him.**" (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 71, 72)

DYING TO SELF

When you are forgotten or neglected or purposely set at naught and you don't sting and hurt with the insult or the oversight, but your heart is still happy, being counted worthy to suffer for Christ,

THAT IS DYING TO SELF

When your good is evil spoken of, when your wishes are crossed, your advice disregarded, your opinions ridiculed, and your best intentions misinterpreted and you refuse to let anger rise in your heart or even defend yourself but rather take it all in patient, loving silence, knowing that Christ alone is your defender,

THAT IS DYING TO SELF

When you patiently bear annoyance, disorder, inconvenience, irregularity, and even impunctuality from others, when you feel your time has been wasted and you've been treated harshly and unfairly and yet you still respond in love, maintaining your peace and enduring these things with meekness as Jesus endured,

THAT IS DYING TO SELF

When you are unruffled with less-than-desirable accommodations, uncomplaining with meager food, difficult climates, or rearranged travel schedules, when you maintain cheer-fulness even though others are grumpy, when you are loving, kind, and attentive even to those who can do you no benefit by their association, when you remain calm despite interruptions to your agenda and plans by the will of God,

THAT IS DYING TO SELF

When you don't care to refer to yourself in conversation, when you don't feel the need to boast of your accomplishments and record every good deed you do for the world to see, when you don't itch after commendation and applause, when you don't mind when others are acknowledged and your name is ignored, when you're more concerned with being faithful to God's call, when you are OK to be unknown,

THAT IS DYING TO SELF

When you see your brother prospering, when you see him succeeding with a project that you contributed to and yet you can honestly rejoice with him in spirit, being happy to remain behind the scenes, not questioning God, but being grateful that the work is being accomplished so that God is glorified,

THAT IS DYING TO SELF

When you can receive correction and reproof from one of less stature than yourself and can humbly submit inwardly as well as outwardly, finding no rebellion or resentment rising up within your heart,

THAT IS DYING TO SELF

In these last days, the Spirit must bring us to the Cross if we would be saved. And once we die on the Cross, we will not respond to any slights against our human flesh any longer because dead people don't move.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20, KJV).

HEARING HIS VOICE

Verses and Quotes About God's Guidance

1. "For the perverse person is an abomination to the Lord, but **His secret counsel is with the upright.**" (Prov. 3:32)
2. "Who is the person who fears the Lord? **He will instruct him** in the way He should choose." (Ps. 25:12, NASB)
3. "**The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him**, and He will show them His covenant." (Ps. 25:14)
4. "For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind and **declares to man what are His thoughts**, He who makes dawn into darkness and treads on high places of the earth, the Lord God of armies is His name." (Amos 4:13, NASB)
5. "**He reveals deep and secret things**; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him." (Dan. 2:22)
6. "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless **He reveals His secret** to His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7)
7. "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, **for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.**" (John 15:15)
8. "As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and **He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.**" (Dan. 2:29)
9. "To him the doorkeeper opens, and **the sheep hear his voice**; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out." (John 10:3)
10. "The sheep follow him, **for they know his voice.**" (John 10:4)
11. "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and **they will hear My voice**; and there will be one flock and one shepherd." (John 10:16)
12. "Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ; we are to draw constantly from Him, partaking of Him, the living Bread that came down from heaven, drawing from a fountain ever fresh, ever giving forth its abundant treasures. If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. **He will speak His mysteries to us personally.** Often there will come to us a sweet joyful sense of the presence of Jesus. Often our hearts will burn within us as He draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. When this is in truth the experience of the Christian, there is seen in his life a simplicity, a humility, meekness, and lowliness of heart, that show to all with whom he associates that he has been with Jesus and learned of Him." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 129, 130)

13. "All who are under the training of God need the quiet hour for communion with their own hearts, with nature, and with God. In them is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and they need to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. **We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God.** He bids us, 'Be still, and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10). This is the effectual preparation for all labor for God. Amidst the hurrying throng, and the strain of life's intense activities, he who is thus refreshed will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. He will receive a new endowment of both physical and mental strength. His life will breathe out a fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach men's hearts." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 58)
14. "**Impressions and feelings are no sure evidence that a person is led by the Lord.** Satan will, if he is unsuspected, give feelings and impressions. These are not safe guides. All should thoroughly acquaint themselves with the evidences of our faith, and the great study should be how they can adorn their profession and bear fruit to the glory of God." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 413)
15. "Impressions alone are not a safe guide to duty. The enemy often persuades men to believe that it is God who is guiding them, when in reality they are following only human impulse. But if we watch carefully, and take counsel with our brethren, we shall be given an understanding of the Lord's will; for the promise is, 'the meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way' (Ps. 25:9)." (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 279)
16. "In the secret place of prayer, where no eye but God's can see, no ear but His can hear, we may pour out our most hidden desires and longings to the Father of infinite pity, and **in the hush and silence of the soul that voice which never fails to answer the cry of human need will speak to our hearts.**" (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 84)
17. "An intensity such as never before was seen is taking possession of the world. In amusement, in moneymaking, in the contest for power, in the very struggle for existence, there is a terrible force that engrosses body and mind and soul. In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking. **He bids us come apart and commune with Him. 'Be still, and know that I am God'** (Ps. 46:10).
 "Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine Teacher. With their burdens they return to their work.
 "These workers can never attain the highest success until they learn the secret of strength. They must give themselves time to think, to pray, to wait upon God for a renewal of physical, mental, and spiritual power. They need the uplifting influence of His Spirit. Receiving this, they will be quickened by fresh life. The wearied frame and tired brain will be refreshed, the burdened heart will be lightened.
"Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need. Happy will it be for the children of our homes and the students of our schools when parents and teachers shall learn in their own lives the precious experience pictured in these words from the Song of Songs: 'As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love' (Sol. 2:3, 4)." (*Education*, pp. 260, 261)

18. "One sentence of scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 71)
19. "Satan well knows that all whom he can lead to neglect prayer and the searching of the Scriptures will be overcome by his attacks. Therefore he invents every possible device to engross the mind." (*The Great Controversy*, p. 519)
20. "In the Bible we have the unerring counsel of God. Its teachings, practically carried out, will fit men for any position of duty. **It is the voice of God speaking every day to the soul.**" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 441)
21. "Every chapter and every verse of the Bible is a communication from God to men. We should bind its precepts as signs upon our hands and as frontlets between our eyes. If studied and obeyed, it would lead God's people, as the Israelites were led, by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night." (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 504)
22. "So with all the promises of God's Word. **In them He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice.** It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from that tree which is 'for the healing of the nations' (Revelation 22:2). Received, assimilated, they are to be the strength of the character, the inspiration and sustenance of the life. Nothing else can have such healing power. Nothing besides can impart the courage and faith which give vital energy to the whole being." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 122)
23. "His power, His very life, dwells in His Word. As you receive the word in faith, it will give you power to obey." (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 150)
24. "The Bible is God's voice speaking to us, just as surely as though we could hear it with our ears. If we realized this, with what awe would we open God's Word, and with what earnestness would we search its precepts! **The reading and contemplation of the Scriptures would be regarded as an audience with the Infinite One.**" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 393)
25. "God's holy, educating Spirit is in His Word. A light, a new and precious light, shines forth from every page. Truth is there revealed, and words and sentences are made bright and appropriate for the occasion, as the voice of God speaking to the soul." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 132)
26. "We shall wait for His hand to lead us; we shall listen to His voice, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it' (Isa. 30:21)." (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 118)
27. "It is one thing to treat the Bible as a book of good moral instruction, to be heeded so far as is consistent with the spirit of the times and our position in the world; it is another thing to regard it as it really is—the word of the living God, the word that is our life, the word that is to mold our actions, our words, and our thoughts. To hold God's word as anything less than this is to reject it. And this rejection by those who profess to believe it, is foremost among the causes of skepticism and infidelity in the youth." (*Education*, p. 260)

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST

As Described in *The Desire of Ages*

Inspired words remind us that “Christ is sitting for His portrait in every disciple” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 827). “Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 69).

This spiritual transformation is accomplished only by turning our eyes away from ourselves and toward Jesus. Ellen White writes, “It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 83).

Start by reading the Gospels and prayerfully meditating on the Savior’s endless love. The following passages from the book *The Desire of Ages* will also help you understand and appreciate His divine character more deeply and fully.

HIS COMPASSION

- Page 86 He always manifested a loving interest in men and shed about Him the light of a cheerful piety.
- 87 He worked to relieve every case of suffering that He saw.
- 90 He spoke words of sympathy as He saw weary men compelled to bear heavy burdens.
- 90 The life of Christ was marked with respect and love for His mother.
- 92 The healing power of love went out from Him to the sick and distressed.
- 151 He manifested an interest in men’s secular affairs.
- 173 He spoke with solemn dignity, and both look and tone expressed such earnest love that sinners were not offended as they realized their humiliating position.
- 254 His tender compassion fell with a touch of healing upon weary and troubled hearts.
- 254 His character expressed love in look and tone, and a sweet, sympathetic spirit.
- 255 When He saw men refuse the message of peace, His heart was pierced to the very depths.
- 319 His heart, that loved and pitied, was a heart of unchanging tenderness.
- 356 His heart overflowed with love for the human race, but He never became indulgent about sin.
- 356 He who taught the people the way to secure peace and happiness was just as thoughtful of their temporal necessities as of their spiritual needs.
- 402 His love was not to be circumscribed to race or nation.

462 He sought not to condemn but to save. He spoke words of comfort and hope.
511 He was a lover of children. His gentle and kindly manner won their love and confidence.
533 His tender, pitying heart was ever awakened to sympathy by suffering.
678 During every hour of His life on earth, the love of God flowed from Him in irrepressible streams.

HIS UNSELFISHNESS

69 His life revealed the grace of unselfish courtesy.
70 From His earliest years He was possessed of one purpose: He lived to bless others.
86 He labored earnestly for humanity.
90 He was always sacrificing Himself for the good of others.
208 He was so emptied of self that He made no plans for Himself.
389 He was so fully surrendered to the will of God that the Father alone appeared in His life.
576 He did not manifest selfish sorrow.
642 His whole life was a life of unselfish service.
643 He did not think of Himself. His care for others was uppermost in His mind.

HIS TACTFULNESS

73 Jesus carried into His labor cheerfulness and tact.
151 He reached the hearts of the people by going among them as one who desired their good.
151 His strong personal sympathy helped to win hearts.
171 He did not meet argument with argument.
253 He made truth beautiful by presenting it in the most direct and simple way.
254 He had tact to meet prejudiced minds.
515 In all His contacts with rude and violent men, He did not use one unkind expression.
535 When He reproved, His words were spoken with the utmost gentleness.
594 It was not His purpose to humiliate His opponents.

HIS HUMILITY AND MEEKNESS

- 74 He shunned display.
- 88 He did not strive for worldly greatness, and in He was content even the lowest position.
- 89 He did not contend for His rights.
- 91 He weeded all vanity from life.
- 137 He took no measures to bring Himself into notice.
- 138 His manners were gentle and unassuming.
- 261 In that life there was no noisy disputation, no ostentatious worship, no act to gain applause.
- 330 He was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment.
- 571 He remained true to the humble lot He had accepted.
- 735 His features expressed gentleness and resignation and the tenderest pity for his cruel foes.

HIS PATIENCE AND COURAGE

- 88 He never manifested an impatient word or look.
- 89 In His work He was willing and uncomplaining.
- 89 He did not retaliate when roughly used but bore insult patiently.
- 89 He never became discouraged.
- 330 He was still of good courage when amid the greatest opposition and most cruel treatment.
- 364 He was not impatient even though interrupted and robbed of rest.
- 619 He spoke no words of retaliation.
- 700 His heart was patient and gentle and would not be provoked.

HIS PURITY

- 72 Neither gain nor pleasure, applause nor censure, could induce Him to consent to a wrong act.
- 72 He was wise to discern evil and strong to resist it.
- 88 He hated but one thing in the world, and that was sin.

- 88 He could not witness a wrong act without pain, which it was impossible to disguise.
- 90 His presence brought a purer atmosphere into the home, and His life was a leaven working amid the elements of society.
- 243 He was the embodiment of purity and dwelt among men as an example of spotless integrity.
- 253 His language was pure, refined, and clear as a running stream.
- 254 He was surrounded with an atmosphere of peace, even amid the turbulence of angry enemies.
- 330 In the heart of Christ, where reigned perfect harmony with God, there was perfect peace.
- 587 His life was a rebuke to men's sins.

HIS DIGNITY AND MANLINESS

- 69 In principle He was firm as a rock.
- 88 He possessed a dignity and individuality wholly distinct from earthly pride and assumption.
- 173 He spoke with solemn dignity.
- 356 He never purchased peace by compromise.
- 581 His enemies read love, benevolence, and dignity in His calm, solemn face.
- 742 Even under disgraceful treatment, He bore Himself with firmness and dignity.

HIS DILIGENCE AND INDUSTRIOUSNESS

- 72 In His industrious life there were no idle moments to invite temptation.
- 72 He was perfect as a workman, as He was in character.
- 86 He labored earnestly for humanity.
- 206 A wise purpose underlay every act of Christ's life on earth.
- 362 His life was crowded with labor and responsibility.

HIS MINISTRY

- 89 He would not enter into controversy, yet His example was a constant lesson.
- 91 He passed by no human being as worthless but sought to save every soul.

91 To the discouraged, sick, tempted, and fallen, Jesus spoke words of tenderest pity.

92 He would not betray secrets that were poured into His sympathizing ear.

151 In every soul He saw one to whom must be given the call to His kingdom.

152 He did not sermonize as men do today.

205 As people heard His words they were warmed and comforted. He spoke of God not as an avenging judge but as a tender Father.

253 He had nothing to do with subjects of dissension. It was His work to present the truth.

253 He taught the Scriptures as of unquestionable authority.

254 He was earnest rather than vehement.

291 He loved to gather the people about Him under the blue heavens, on some grassy hillside, or on the beach beside the lake.

336 He rested by faith in His Father's care.

362 His life was crowded with duties, yet He was often found in prayer.

434 He taught men not to place themselves needlessly in antagonism to established order.

451 He was not presumptuous, nor would He rush into danger or hasten a crisis.

594 It was not His purpose to humiliate His opponents.

A.C.T.S. PRAYER FORMAT

*Try using this simple acronym to guide your prayer time: ACTS.
Conclude by asking God to guide your actions and choices for the rest of the day.
“In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Prov. 3:6).*

ADORATION: Lord, I praise You for—

CONFESSION: I confess the sin of—

THANKSGIVING: I choose to thank You for—

SUPPLICATION: I pray for—

Here’s what I need to do today in relation to—

God:

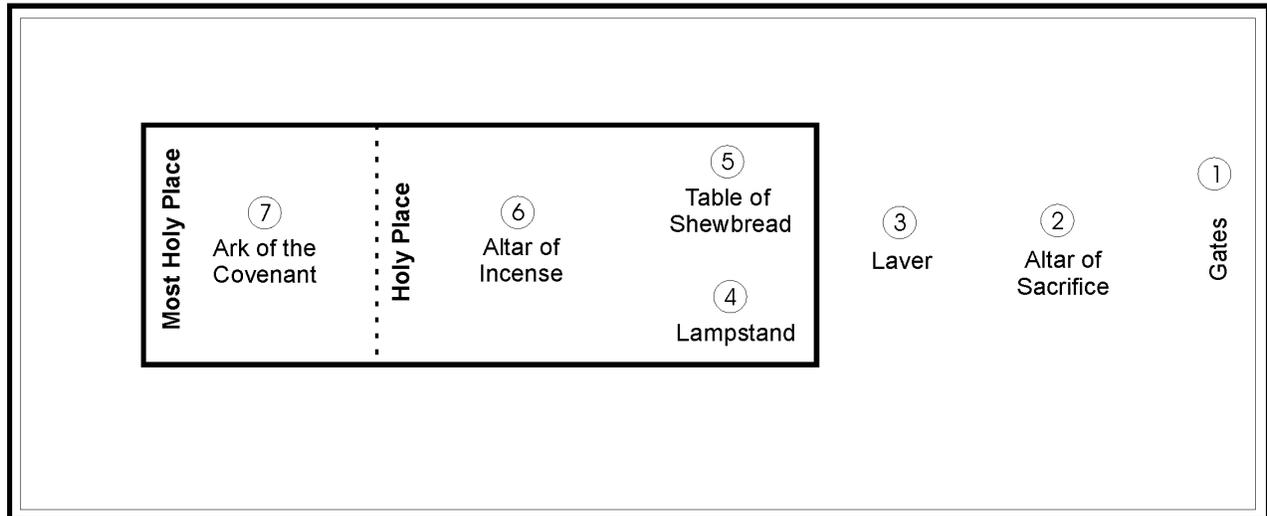
My Family:

My Character:

My Ministry:

THE SANCTUARY AS A MODEL FOR PRAYER

The Israelite sanctuary described in Exodus was designed by God to portray the entire process of salvation. The sanctuary symbols also provide a possible model for your personal prayers. As you pray, imagine yourself passing through the courtyard and into the tabernacle itself.



KEY

Gates:

Enter your prayer time with praise. (Ps. 100; Luke 10:21)

Altar of Sacrifice:

Confess your sins to God and confess your faith in Jesus as Lord. (1 John 1:8, 9; Rom. 10:9; 2 Tim. 2:19)

Laver:

Accept that you are washed by the Word. (Eph. 5:25, 26; John 17:17)

Lampstand:

Ask for the baptism of the Holy Spirit (symbolized by the oil). (Luke 11:13; Gal. 5:22-25)

Table of Shewbread:

Receive strength for the day. (John 6:32, 33; Rom. 13:14; Eph. 6:10-18)

Altar of Incense:

Offer intercessory prayer for others. (Phil. 1:3, 4; Rom. 1:9, 10)

Ark of the Covenant:

Experience intimate communion with God. (Ps. 16:8, 11)
Enter into the heavenly sanctuary with Christ. (Heb. 10:19, 20)
(for more context see Matt. 27:51a; Heb. 9:8-14; Heb. 10:11-22)

THE LORD'S PRAYER AS A MODEL FOR PRAYER

Focus Upon God

- A. Hallowed be Your name
 - 1. Praise God for His character
 - 2. Praise God for His works
- B. Your kingdom come (acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord)
 - 1. In my own life
 - 2. Intercede for others
 - a. Family
 - b. Friends
 - c. Church
 - d. Country/World
- C. Your will be done
 - 1. Lay out my plans before the Lord
 - 2. Intercede for others

Present Our Needs

- D. Give us this day our daily bread
 - 1. Present specific physical needs before the Lord
 - 2. Claim His promises to provide
- E. Forgive us our debts
 - 1. Confess specific personal sins and sins of family
 - 2. Claim His promises of forgiveness, cleansing, and healing
- F. Deliver us from evil
 - 1. Accept power from God through the anointing of the Holy Spirit
 - 2. Put on the whole armor of God

Focus Upon God

- G. Conclude by giving praise and glory to God
- H. Trust in His abiding presence

ENCOUNTERING GOD IN PRAYER

A Model for Prayer and Confession

1. Ask the Father for the covering of the Holy Spirit to bring the presence of Jesus into your heart. Claim the blood of Jesus over all sin. Ask for angels to guard you, since He has promised. Ask Him to make sure that no other influences or thoughts are allowed to disturb this time and that He will protect.
2. Worship the Creator, Redeemer, King, etc.
3. Invite Him to search your life for a revelation of hidden sin. Allow Him to take you back to childhood if necessary. Take time to be attentive and listen.
4. As conviction comes to your mind of thoughts, acts, cherished “rights” such as anger, rebellion and resentment, or experiences that in the presence of the cross are sin—be specific, call it sin, and ask for forgiveness. Accept forgiveness and thank Him aloud. (Your ears need to hear your own voice expressing confidence and praise.)
5. Ask for a deeper repentance. Since it is a gift, thank Him, whether you feel anything or not.
6. By your own free choice, tell your Heavenly Father you give Him permission to remove the sin and sense of guilt or condemnation that came with the sin. Let God know you allow Him to place the burden you have been carrying on the shoulders of His Son. Accept Jesus’ desire to release you from this guilt. Christ wants to do this for you. Be sure to express thanks aloud.
7. Ask God what He has for you in exchange. What characteristic of Jesus is He waiting to give you? What gift of guidance or insight is He making available? Take time to be attentive and listen.
8. Let God know you will accept that gift (whatever thought, word, or picture He brings to your mind). Be sure to thank Him aloud.
9. Repeat the process as desired. Enjoy His presence. Praise Him.
10. At the time you are accepting gifts from God, if He has just impressed you of specific instances of sin, you may want to ask what help He would have sent if you had turned to Him fully in that earlier moment of temptation. Or you may ask what Jesus would have done in your place. He may give you delightful insights.
11. You may want to ask Him in the final moments of this specific prayer if there is anything or anyone else He wants you to pray about, or if there is any particular instruction He wants to share with you. Take time to be attentive and listen.
12. Be sure to praise Him aloud as you end the time of prayer. You’ll want to. He’s a wonderful God, and a marvelous, generous, loving Friend.

Created by Juanita Kretschmar

GETTING STARTED IN PRAYER MINISTRIES

Practical Steps for Leaders

1. Pray for a hungering and thirsting after God.
2. Ask God to give others a burden for prayer. Then identify a group of praying people who can provide leadership in a prayer movement.
3. Appoint a prayer coordinator or prayer director in the church who will plan, program, and manage times of prayer. Such an individual's main task is to keep the vision of prayer in front of the people.
4. Promote prayer in connection with projects of the church, such as ministries, events, the work of the local Adventist school, and evangelistic series.
5. Regularly publish and distribute a church prayer list.
6. Emphasize intercessory prayer for unsaved people. Aim to have at least 50 percent of your congregation praying for others.
7. Have more than one prayer meeting each week. Develop a whole program of prayer meetings according to ages, agencies, tasks, and needs (prayer for the sick, a ministry to Jewish people, men and women in the armed forces, college students, missionaries, etc.).
8. Plan interesting and special programs with a special emphasis on prayer. Some ideas are:
 - Hold a prayer conference in your church.
 - Provide two or three prayer retreats each year.
 - Host a prayer banquet.
 - At least once a year, preach a series on prayer.
 - Offer a small-group Bible study or Sabbath School class on prayer.
 - Establish a men's and women's prayer breakfast group that will meet for prayer every month.
 - Schedule, during the corporate worship hour, testimonies about prayer every two or three weeks.

*From The Big Four by Joseph Kidder
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GOD'S POWER UNLEASHED

United Prayer and Church Growth in Acts

Acts 1:14, 15: Believers met in the Upper Room. They “all continued with one accord in prayer.” These days of repentance, confession, and humility—as well as seeking the Lord’s vision, power, and the Holy Spirit—were followed by Pentecost, one of the most powerful events of Scripture. Just 120 believers added 3,000 to their number in one day!

Acts 2:42-47: The newly baptized believers continued daily to study, fellowship, worship, and pray together, and “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

Acts 4:18-33: Peter and John were threatened not to speak or teach about Jesus. The church cried out in united prayer to God for boldness. The room was shaken, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God boldly. They gave witness with great power and grace.

Acts 6:1-7: The early church faced practical problems. The apostles realized they must focus on the ministry of prayer and the Word, so seven deacons were chosen to care for the congregation. God blessed these plans: the Word of God spread, the number of disciples increased, and many priests became obedient to the Word.

Acts 8:14-25: Peter and John successfully interceded for those who had not yet received the Holy Spirit. They also preached the gospel in many Samaritan villages. Prayer was the secret of their powerful witness. The Word of God moves forward only with prayer.

Acts 10:9-48: God sent a vision to prepare Cornelius to receive the gospel. He sent another vision to prepare Peter to take the gospel to Gentiles. The two men were miraculously brought together thanks to prayer, fasting, and visions.

Acts 12:1-24: Herod threw Peter into prison. But “constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church” (verse 5). An angel set him free, and he hurried to Mary’s home “where many were gathered together praying.” His escape caused a stir, and Herod continued to search for him, but “the word of God grew and multiplied” (verse 24).

Acts 13:1-48: As the prophets and teachers fasted and prayed, the Holy Spirit called Paul and Barnabas to go on their first missionary journey. The church prayed with the laying on of hands before sending them out.

- They started churches and proclaimed the gospel in Cyprus.
- Almost the entire city gathered to hear the Word of the Lord in Pisidian Antioch.
- “When the Gentiles heard this. . . as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed” (verse 48).
- The Word of the Lord spread through the entire region.
- And the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Acts 14:23-28: Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church and commended them to the Lord with prayer and fasting. They reported all that God had done through them, and the Lord opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Acts 16:13-34: Paul looked for places where united prayer was happening, and that's where God worked His miracles.

- Paul looked for a place where united prayer was being offered in Philippi. On Sabbath he met Lydia, and she and her household were baptized.
- They were on the way to a place of prayer when Paul cast the demon out of a slave girl.
- Paul and Silas were put in prison for casting an evil spirit out, so they prayed and sang. An earthquake loosened their chains, but they ministered to the jailer instead of escaping. The entire household was converted and baptized.

Notice the constant process we see in the book of Acts:

1. Situation/problem arises.
2. God's people gather/pray/fast.
3. Holy Spirit's power is poured out.
4. The problem is overcome.
5. Challenge leads to proclamation of God's Word.
6. People obey.
7. People criticize.
8. The Word of God spreads more!

The united prayer of God's people leads to the growth and spread of God's church.

PRINCIPLES OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER

If God is already infinitely loving, all-knowing, and all-powerful, why do we need to pray for others?

WHY PRAY FOR OTHERS?

Since God is already involved in everyone's life for their good, isn't He already doing everything that needs to be done? While we may never understand all the issues involved, the following principles about intercessory prayer do seem clear:

A. Intercession is our Lord's plan and command for us.

1. Jesus calls us to intercession. (Luke 11:1-13)
 - a. Jesus teaches the disciples to intercede in the Lord's prayer. (Luke 11:1-4)
 - b. He stresses the importance of persistent intercession in the parable of the persistent friend. (Luke 11:5-8)
 - c. He promises it will be effective: "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." (Luke 11:9, 10)
 - d. Jesus promises the Holy Spirit will be given "to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:11-13)
2. Jesus Himself interceded for others.
 - a. He was often found in prayer. (Mark 1:35; Luke 11:1)
 - b. He interceded much for his followers. (John 17:6-26)
3. Prophets also confirm it is God's plan.
 - a. Apostle Paul: "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men. . . . For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." (1 Tim. 2:1-3)
 - b. James: "You do not have because you do not ask." (James 4:2)
 - c. Ellen White: "Ministering angels are waiting about the throne to instantly obey the mandate of Jesus Christ to answer every prayer offered in earnest, living faith." (*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 377)

B. Intercession opens doors in the Great Controversy to release God's power. He has limited Himself in some ways to our prayers.

1. "It is part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask." (*The Great Controversy*, p. 525)
2. "Satan cannot endure to have his powerful rival appealed to, for he fears and trembles before His strength and majesty. At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 346)
3. "Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 362)

C. Intercessory prayer changes me in positive ways. It intensifies my desire for the things prayed for and opens my mind to the prompting and communications of the Holy Spirit.

1. "Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 93)

D. Intercessory prayer works. Taste and see!

1. "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." (1 John 5:14, 15)

E. Okay, the Lord has called us to intercede. But how?

HOW TO PRAY FOR OTHERS: PRACTICAL STEPS

A. Pray in faith, following the ABCs of prayer: Ask, Believe, Claim.

1. Claim His promises: "By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. 1:4)
2. Give thanks in advance of seeing the answer.
 - a. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6, 7)
 - b. "For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift that He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received. We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realized when we need it most." (*Education*, p. 258)
 - c. "We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. If the lovingkindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317)

B. Unite with others in intercession for greater power.

1. "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19, 20)
2. Use short sentence prayers or "conversational prayer" when interceding in a group for better interest level and ministry to each other.

C. Be specific with requests and record the answers.

1. A prayer journal or prayer list helps memory and strengthens our faith as answers come. Write the requests down and record the answers as they come.

D. Be persistent and don't give up.

1. "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving." (Col. 4:2)
2. "Perseverance in prayer has been made a condition of receiving. We must pray always if we would grow in faith and experience." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 97)
3. "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)

E. Take time for heart searching, confession, and obedience.

1. "For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." (1 John 3:20-22)

F. Prioritize your personal time with God

1. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (John 15:7)

G. Trust God—He always answers, but sometimes He says "No" or "Wait."

1. Consider the definition of true faith found in Daniel 3:17, 18. The three Hebrews vowed to follow God even if He did not deliver them from the fiery furnace.
2. If God really wanted to punish us, He'd answer all our prayers with "yes."
3. "When we do not receive the very things we ask for, at the time we ask, we are still to believe that the Lord hears, and that He will answer our prayers. We are so erring and short-sighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing to us, and our heavenly Father in love answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for our highest good—that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened we could see all things as they really are. When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most. . . . God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely upon His sure promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you' (Matthew 7:7)." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 96)

THE POWER OF PRAYING TOGETHER

When God's people pray together, the heavens move.

These quotations by Ellen White will inspire you to experience the miracle of united prayer for yourself.

1. "We are encouraged to pray for success, with the divine assurance that our prayers will be heard and answered. 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matt. 18:19, 20). 'Ask of Me, and I will answer your requests.'
"The promise is made on condition that the united prayers of the church are offered, and in answer to these prayers there may be expected a power greater than that which comes in answer to private prayer. The power given will be proportionate to the unity of the members and their love of God and for one another." (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 303)
2. "Our Savior follows His lessons of instruction with a promise that if two or three should be united in asking anything of God it should be given them. Christ here shows that there must be union with others, even in our desires for a given object. Great importance is attached to the united prayer, the union of purpose. God hears the prayers of individuals, but on this occasion Jesus was giving especial and important lessons that were to have a special bearing upon His newly organized church on the earth. There must be an agreement in the things which they desire and for which they pray. It was not merely the thoughts and exercises of one mind, liable to deception; but the petition was to be the earnest desire of several minds centered on the same point." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 429)
3. "It is in the order of God that those who bear responsibilities should often meet together to counsel with one another, and to pray earnestly for that wisdom which He alone can impart. **Unitedly** make known your troubles to God. **Talk less;** much precious time is lost in talk that brings no light. **Let brethren unite in fasting and prayer** for the wisdom that God has promised to supply liberally." (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 499)
4. "A chain of earnest, praying believers should encircle the world. Let all pray in humility. A few neighbors may meet together to pray for the Holy Spirit. Let those who can not leave home, gather in their children, and unite in learning to pray together. They may claim the promise of the Savior: **'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them'** (Matt. 18:20)." (*Review and Herald*, January 3, 1907)
5. "If we would accomplish the great work before us, it is essential that we present to God fervent and effectual prayer; for it availeth much. The prayer needed at this time is the earnest, unbroken, continuous prayer, not fitful, uncertain prayers, wavering as the waves of the sea. If several should meet together with one accord, with hearts burdened for perishing souls, and should offer earnest, fervent prayers, they would prove effectual." (*Review and Herald*, Aug. 23, 1892)
6. "The Lord has promised that where two or three are met together in His name, there will He be in the midst. Those who meet together for prayer, will receive an unction from the Holy One. There is great need of secret prayer, but there is also need of several Christians meeting together, to unite with earnestness their petitions to God. In these small companies Jesus is present, and the love of souls is deepened in the heart, and the Spirit puts forth His mighty energies, that human agents may be exercised in regard to saving those who are lost." (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 190)

7. "There is nothing more needed in the work than the practical results of communion with God. **We should hold convocations for prayer**, asking the Lord to open the way for the truth to enter the strongholds where Satan has set up his throne, and dispel the shadow he has cast athwart the pathway of those whom he is seeking to deceive and destroy. We have the assurance, '**The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much**' (James 5:16)." (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 93)
8. "God would work mightily for His people today if they would place themselves wholly under His guidance. They need the constant abiding of the Holy Spirit. If there were more prayer in the councils of those bearing responsibilities, more humbling of the heart before God, we should see abundant evidence of divine leadership, and our work would make rapid progress." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 238)
9. "Solicit prayer for the souls for whom you labor; present them before the church as subjects for their supplication. It will be just what the members of the church need, to have their minds called from their petty difficulties, to feel a great burden, a personal interest, for a soul that is ready to perish. Select another and still another soul, daily seeking guidance from God, laying every thing before Him in earnest prayer, and working in divine wisdom. As you do this, God will give you the Holy Spirit to convict and convert the soul." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 80, 81)
10. "Why do not believers feel a deeper, more earnest concern for those who are out of Christ? Why do not two or three meet together and plead with God for the salvation of some special one, and then for still another?" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 21)
11. "We must be much in prayer if we would make progress in the divine life. When the message of truth was first proclaimed, how much we prayed. How often was the voice of intercession heard in the chamber, in the barn, in the orchard, or the grove. **Frequently we spent hours in earnest prayer, two or three together claiming the promise**; often the sound of weeping was heard and then the voice of thanksgiving and the song of praise. **Now the day of God is nearer than when we first believed, and we should be more earnest, more zealous, and fervent than in those early days**. Our perils are greater now than then. Souls are more hardened. We need now to be imbued with the Spirit of Christ, and we should not rest until we receive it." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 161, 162)
12. "If the people of God would only exercise faith, He would work in a wonderful manner to accomplish this work. Hear the words of Christ: 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.' Precious promise! Do we believe it? **What marvelous results would appear if the united prayers of this company were to ascend to God in living faith!** Jesus stands ready to take these petitions and present them to His Father, saying, 'I know these persons by name. Send answers to their prayers; for I have graven their names on the palms of My hands.'" (*Evangelism*, p. 414)
13. "Brethren should stand shoulder to shoulder, uniting their prayers at the throne of grace, that they may move the arm of the Omnipotent. Heaven and earth will then be closely connected in the work, and there will be joy and gladness in the presence of the angels of God, when the lost sheep is found and restored." (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 210)
14. "In every church there should be stated seasons for united prayer for the advancement of this work. Let all be united, having a specific object for their faith and entreaties." (*Historical Sketches*, p. 294)

15. "In all our councils, all our plans for the advancement of His cause, the upbuilding of His kingdom, **God desires that we rely entirely upon His power**, knowing that it is indispensable to success. How can we honor God, how can we vindicate His Word, unless we are much in prayer, appealing to Him to manifest His power in behalf of the perishing?" (*Review and Herald*, Aug. 23, 1892)
16. "When two or three are met together to unite their counsel, and to send up their petitions, the promise is for them: 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you' (Luke 11:9). 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' (verse 13). The Lord has promised that where two or three are met together in His name, there will He be in the midst. Those who meet together for prayer will receive an unction from the Holy One." (*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 161)
17. "The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. Those who have not been living in Christian fellowship will draw close to one another. One member working in right lines will lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit. There will be no confusion, because all will be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 251)
18. "I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said, '**Ye let go of the arm of the Lord too soon. Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith.**'" (*Early Writings*, p. 73)
19. "There are many who long to help others, but they feel that they have no spiritual strength or light to impart. Let them present their petitions at the throne of grace. Plead for the Holy Spirit. God stands back of every promise He has made. With your Bible in your hands say, I have done as Thou hast said. I present Thy promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.'" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147)
20. "He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. **He longs to have you expect great things from Him.** He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 146)

PRAYER GROUP SUGGESTIONS

Are you wondering how to make your small-group prayer time more powerful? Start by focusing on prayer instead of on discussion or other activities. These ideas may help.

Begin With Praise and Thanksgiving

The Bible challenges us to start our prayer time with praise: “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name” (Ps. 100:4). Continue to mingle praise and thanksgiving with prayer requests throughout your prayer time. Look to the biblical examples of Daniel, Elijah, and others who always began by thanking God for blessings or confessing who God is.

Ellen White adds this convicting reminder: “We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer. We would abound more and more in the love of God and have more bestowed to praise Him for” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317; take time to read this entire excellent passage on pages 315–317).

Confess Any Sin

What a difference it makes to spend the first few minutes of prayer time clearing the path for God to hear your prayers as a group. Allow God to impress your minds with any sin you need to confess. Make this a silent time for individual communion with God. Claim this promise: “Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight” (1 John 3:21, 22).

Some prayer leaders prefer using a prepared guide for leading a group through confession time. You can find one sample in this resource booklet (see “Encountering God in Prayer,” by Juanita Kretschmar).

Pray in Two’s and Three’s

It is wonderful to have more people, but you only need two or three. Jesus promises, “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:19, 20). Ellen White further explains: “Our Savior follows His lessons of instruction with a promise that if two or three should be united in asking anything of God it should be given them. Christ here shows that there must be union with others, even in our desires for a given object. Great importance is attached to the united prayer, the union of purpose” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 429).

Meet Every Week

Be sure to meet regularly for prayer, once a week if possible. Whenever you can, meet in person; otherwise, pray together by phone or video connection.

Pray Sentence Prayers

Instead of having each person pray a long prayer one after another, have each person pray only two or three sentences at a time. This is much easier to listen to and allows the Holy Spirit time to impress each person with what He wants you to pray about. You may add variety to the prayer time by reading occasional Bible verses or singing a verse from a familiar song. It can be a beautiful experience! God loves for us to read His Word back to Him in expressions of praise or faith. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16). You’ll be amazed at how long a group can pray together and enjoy it!

Claim Bible Promises

Ask God to lead your group to promises in His Word that you can claim for the situation you are praying about. And remember to write those promises down so you can claim them again in the future. We are told to put our finger on a promise and bring it before the Lord. Thank Him in advance for answering according to His will.

“He is pleased with the faith that takes Him at His word. The mother of Augustine prayed for her son’s conversion. She saw no evidence that the Spirit of God was impressing his heart, but she was not discouraged. She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God His own words, and pleaded as only a mother can. Her deep humiliation, her earnest importunities, her unwavering faith, prevailed, and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart. Today He is just as ready to listen to the petitions of His people. His “hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 322, 323).

Agree Together in Prayer

Whenever one group member prays a request to God, be sure that some others “agree together” by briefly praying for that same request. This is powerful. Remember this promise: “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven” (Matt. 18:19). How encouraging it is to be lifted up in prayer!

Seek the Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you how or what you should pray for in a situation or in a person’s life. Claim Romans 8:26: “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

Pray Your Requests Instead of Discussing Them

Don’t ask for prayer requests before you start to pray. Ask people to pray their requests instead, and encourage others to join in agreement and pray for those requests. Here’s why: time! Talking about the requests will take up most of your prayer time. Satan is thrilled if he can keep us talking about problems instead of praying about them. Group members will often begin counseling and suggesting solutions. But the power is not from humans but from God. The more we pray, the more His power is unleashed.

Start a Prayer Request Notebook

Use a blank note pad or spiral notebook. Draw a line down the middle of the paper and write requests in the left column and answers in the right. Update the notebook every time you meet. Some answers may take time, but keep praying and trust God’s timing. It is so exciting to look back and see how God has answered your prayers!

Remember Your Daily Time With Jesus

This is so important! What is life all about if we are not spending time daily at the feet of Jesus—talking with Him and reading His Word? If you make knowing God the first priority in your life, it will open such a beautiful experience to you. “From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 210).

“It is part of God’s plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow if we did not thus ask.” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 525)

GUIDELINES FOR BELIEVERS WHO REQUEST ANOINTING

God longs to pour out healing when we suffer. "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).

What is anointing?

Anointing is a biblical rite established in the Old Testament and carried into the New Testament. Priests and kings in the Old Testament were anointed with oil as a symbol of the Holy Spirit coming upon them to lead God's people. Jesus enlarged the rite of anointing by inviting believers to engage in this when sick.

When is anointing appropriate?

Contrary to what some people believe, anointing is not a last rite. The Bible invites us to pray with anointing whenever there is a need, not only on a person's deathbed.

Who can be anointed?

Any believer in Christ who has a need for healing and a desire to be prayed for and anointed.

Why does the pastor or elder anoint with olive oil?

Oil represents the Holy Spirit. Olive oil was used for anointing in Bible times.

What can I be anointed for?

Any sickness, including physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, and social, as well as uncontrollable or addictive behaviors. People have been anointed for depression, bad habits, mental challenges, disabilities, and other challenges from Satan, as well as for physical illness.

How should I prepare for anointing?

Psalm 66:18 says, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." All known sin must be confessed. When you cling to sin, God cannot bless you as He wants to. "If any who are seeking health have been guilty of evil speaking, if they have sowed discord in the home, the neighborhood, or the church, and have stirred up alienation and dissension, if by any wrong practice they have led others into sin, these things should be confessed before God and before those who have been offended. . . . When wrongs have been righted, we may present the needs of the sick to the Lord in calm faith, as His Spirit may indicate" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 229).

If you feel like you cannot gain victory over a sin problem, this can be made a subject of prayer in the anointing service. Place your trust in the Lord and His grace. Jesus is able to heal every need. Besides searching your life for sins and confessing them, you may study and read the following:

James 5:13-16	Psalm 107:17-20
Psalm 66:18	Psalm 41:10
Jeremiah 30:17	Jeremiah 17:14
Isaiah 61:1-3	Psalm 103

Also, you may wish to read the chapter "Prayer for the Sick" in *The Ministry of Healing*.

Will I have to disclose why I'm being anointed?

You do not have to mention specifically why you wish to be anointed. But those praying for you will need to know your need in a general way so they know how to pray for you.

What will happen at the service?

You will have opportunity to share your reason for requesting the anointing with a small group of people conducting the anointing. These people will kneel in a circle around you to pray and claim specific promises of healing for you. You may request special friends to accompany you and pray for you as well. One person will close the prayer time by praying and touching your forehead with oil. Sometimes the group chooses to quietly sing a song after the anointing is finished.

How can I know if I will be healed?

You can trust God to bring you healing, even if it is not in the way you want or expect. (Remember that healing is not only physical but can include forgiveness, peace of mind, emotional well-being, and so on.) Realize that God sometimes chooses to heal in stages. Some have been healed from pain. Others have found relief through doctors and surgeries. Know that on every occasion of anointing, blessings can be received. Trust that God will heal you as He sees fit—even if you must wait until eternity. You can claim James 5:15: “And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well [whole]” (NIV).

Resources for anointing:

Bible: James 5:13-16 and other passages about healing

The Ministry of Healing, by Ellen White

“Anointing: The Lost Rite,” *Ministry Magazine*, Sept. 1989

Created by Peggy Casebier

HEALING PROMISES FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER

The Great Physician still works in our world today.

Whether He heals you physically, mentally, or spiritually, He will not fail to satisfy your deepest desires.

Invite Him to walk through the valley of suffering beside you.

1. "I call on the Lord in my distress, and he answers me." (Ps.120:1)
2. "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases." (Ps. 103:2, 3)
3. "Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear." (Isa. 65:24)
4. "He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak." (Isa. 40:29)
5. "He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair." (Isa. 61:1-3)
6. "Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise." (Jer. 17:14)
7. "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." (Mark 11:24)
8. "For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received." (*Education*, p. 258).
9. "Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." (James 5:14, 15)

Bible verses on this page quoted from NIV (1984 edition)

PARTNERING IN PRAYER

Deepen your spiritual experience by praying weekly or daily with a prayer partner. "If two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven." (Matt. 18:19, NIV)

Why Is Prayer Partnering so Important?

- God asks us to pray for each other. (Eph. 6:18)
- Praying with others enriches your personal prayer life.
- Prayer partnering fills people's deep hunger to have others caring and praying for them.
- Prayer partnering helps you appreciate the meaning of Christian community.
- Prayer partnering assists you in being accountable to at least one other person.
- Prayer partnering puts us on track with God.
- Prayer partnering sets God's power to work in your life and in the church.

Guidelines for Prayer Partnering

- Decide how many times you will meet and how often.
- Withhold judgment regarding anything said.
- Resist the temptation to become a counselor; your partner's problems are not yours to solve.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Try to spend most of your time together praying rather than talking about what to pray about.
- Keep a record of answers.
- Claim Bible promises as you pray.
- Keep prayer times conversational; pray in short sentences or paragraphs.
- View pauses or silence as a normal and positive ingredient of your times together.

Work Through the Barriers of Prayer Partnering

- **Time:** We make time for what matters to us. Prayer is a paradox that both takes time and frees time.
- **Risk:** We fear being vulnerable or misunderstood. What may seem initially intimidating can become a blessing if we give it time.
- **Previous Bad Experience:** One bad experience doesn't have to lead to another. If your first experience with prayer partnering does not work out, try again with a new partner.
- **Feelings:** Some struggle with feelings of inadequacy, fear, or doubt in their prayer lives. These feelings are normal when trying something new. Honestly acknowledge your feelings and pray about them.

What Do Prayer Partners Pray About?

- Praise and thanksgiving
- Family concerns (spouse, children, in-law issues)
- Mutual friends
- Work pressures
- Church matters

- Personal requests (temptation areas, new ministry opportunities, future dreams, etc.)
- Individual and corporate church revival
- Outpouring of the Holy Spirit
- Non-attending members
- Your community
- National leaders
- Pastor and church leaders
- Prayer Partner Ministry
- Students, teachers, and schools

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” (Eph. 6:18, NIV)

Created by Peggy Casebier

HOW TO PRAY WITH YOUR SPOUSE

Praying together can add intimacy, both to your marriage and to your relationship with God. Here's how to get started.

"If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask," Christ promised in Matthew 18:19, "it will be done for them by My Father in heaven."

This promise, of course, is not limited to married couples, but who else has the capacity to agree so deeply? And who else needs such prayer so badly?

Couple prayer, as I call it, can be a powerful tool in deepening communication and commitment to each other. Here are some ideas to help you and your mate along the road to openness in prayer.

Begin Gently

Ann and David hadn't always prayed together. They knew they should. They both wanted to, but Ann suffered from low self-esteem.

"I always felt David was more spiritual than I," she explains. "I thought he wouldn't think the things I prayed about were important. He'd criticize my prayer, maybe even diagram it in his head." The time came, however, when David persuaded her to try. "This is something we must do. Our kids need it," he insisted.

"We began with just a few sentences each," Ann remembers. "David was very gentle with me, and gradually I began to feel more comfortable about praying with him. If we couldn't have prayed through these last crises, I don't know how we'd have made it."

If your spouse is like Ann, here are some ways you can help:

Don't push. If you're eager to pray together, but your spouse is not, go easy. This sounds simple, but it's very difficult when you know how necessary and how powerful couple prayer is.

Be sensitive. Your spouse may want to pray with you but find it hard. It is harder for some people than it is for others. Often, as you become more open in other areas, however, you will become more open in prayer as well.

Let your spouse know you value his or her prayers. "I'd really appreciate it if you'd pray for me as you go through the day. I'm scared about—"

Mealtime prayers are an easy way to start. Hold hands around the table. You may be able to introduce a little more depth by suggesting, "Honey, when you pray at dinner, would you thank the Lord for helping Angie with her test." Or, "Would you mind praying for the medical tests I'm having tomorrow." Go easy, though. Remember, don't push!

Pray with the children. Some spouses feel more free in praying aloud with the children than alone together. If your spouse does, be grateful for that at least.

Share prayer requests and pray together silently before going to sleep. If the reluctant spouse doesn't feel his prayer is being judged, he or she may be more willing. This was our first step back into praying together.

Pray together in times of crisis. “When there is a specific need,” one woman told me, “we pray better.” When you have children, that can be most of the time.

Make Time

In these days of two-career families and busy schedules, making time for couple prayer can be a formidable hurdle, but others have succeeded, and you can too. It’s really a matter of priorities. If prayer is important to both of you, you’ll make the time.

Pray about finding a suitable time. If possible, pray together about it. Then start experimenting. One of these options may work for you:

Set the alarm a few minutes earlier in the morning. Catherine Marshall and her husband, Len LeSourd, would spend their mornings propped up in bed as they prayed and studied the Scriptures together.

If you breakfast together, pray then. We do this, though it’s not our main prayer time. I feel good about the day when I’ve heard Pete pray for me and the children. He appreciates my prayers then too.

Pray before going to bed. It can be very comforting to share with God about both the day’s blessings and problems before going to sleep.

Pray on the telephone together at lunch or another convenient time during the day. You can also do this when one spouse is out of town—it’s a lovely way to keep in touch.

Take time for spontaneous prayers whenever a need arises. This may even be several times a day.

If you absolutely do not have a time when you can pray together on a daily basis, agree to set aside a time once a week when you can pray. Make it special. Share a scripture or two to set the tone.

List prayer requests and praises for each other, then pray separately, but at the same time if possible. You can be close in spirit, even when you are not together in body. If you are accustomed to praying together at 10:00 p.m. but one spouse is out of town, try to continue the practice. Just meet in spirit at God’s throne.

Experiment

Once you’ve incorporated couple prayer into your schedule, experiment with different prayer styles to find the one that fits your needs. When you find it, you may want to occasionally use a different method to add variety.

Conversational prayer. Begin with praise and thanksgiving. Continue to confession of specific sin and end with requests. Let the conversation flow back and forth, with each partner praying spontaneously. Recognize God as a participant; accept short silences as times when He may be speaking.

Structured conversational prayer. As with conversational prayer, begin with praise, thanksgiving, and confession of sin. When you are ready to make requests, one spouse leads out with a concern. The other then continues that prayer from his or her own perspective.

Suppose Johnnie is having trouble with mathematics at school, for example. The husband may pray for him to be able to concentrate and understand the concepts better. The wife continues by praying for patience on the part of the teacher or herself in working with him. The wife then prays about a subject of concern to

her. When she finishes, her husband continues that prayer, adding his own thoughts about it. He then introduces another prayer request. This method of prayer helps each partner concentrate on the prayer of the other, since he will continue the same subject.

Traditional prayer. In this style of prayer, one person prays about all of his/her concerns. Then, the other prays about all his concerns. If you have been brought up on this kind of prayer or like things very structured, you may feel more comfortable with this style. This type of prayer requires more concentration on the part of the agreeing (listening) spouse, however. So avoid lengthy prayers, unless they are meaningful to both of you.

Ideally, prayer times should include praise, confession, requests, and listening to God's voice. Practically, it's more important that you pray than that you get all the parts incorporated properly. If there's only time for a short sentence or two, God understands.

Pray With—Not at—Your Spouse

My husband, Pete, and I faced our own crisis over prayer in the first month of our marriage. Each evening we'd kneel by the sofa for our prayer time. I treasured those minutes as we poured out our hearts to God, telling Him our needs and desires.

Then one night before we prayed, Pete looked at me and said, "Sometimes I feel like you pray at me." "What?" I asked. "I just tell the Lord the needs as I see them."

"But, when you pray, 'Lord, help us do this or that,' I feel like you are really pointing out what you think I should be doing," he insisted.

Deep inside, I knew he was right, but how could he criticize my prayers to God? How could I ever again be spontaneous in our prayers together?

Devastated, my emotions erupted in uncontrollable sobbing. Pete looked on helplessly. When there were no more tears, we discovered that our ability to be vulnerable in prayer together had disappeared. Many years passed before it was restored.

Here are some suggestions on how to keep your prayer time a positive experience:

Don't scold or nag. Unless your spouse asks for prayer in an area where you think he or she needs improvement or help, it's wise to keep quiet. Reserve those prayers for private time with the Lord. No one likes to be preached at—especially in prayer.

Find common ground. You don't have to agree with your mate on everything about a situation in order to pray together over it. You may need to sort through the pieces, discuss, perhaps even vent your anger or get counseling in a crisis. But at prayer time, decide what the bottom line is.

Accept yourself and your mate. Some people, for instance, are naturally more reticent to pray with their spouse than are others. Perhaps they consider prayer a private thing, or maybe they are more regimented. These people are often matched with more open, spontaneous mates. Learn to appreciate these differences.

Focus on Jesus. One wife told me, “Sometimes I feel like we’re praying to each other, rather than to God.” To avoid that danger, take a little time to center your thoughts on Jesus. Sing a worship song, read a Psalm, have a short praise time together.

Persevere. Anything new feels difficult and awkward. Then too, I’m convinced that Satan will prevent any kind of prayer if he can—but how much more so couple prayer! Whatever you do, don’t get discouraged if you miss a day or two.

Again, don’t give up! Things that are worthwhile usually do take time. I pray that the day will come when you will say to your spouse, “I don’t know how I’d have gotten through this day (or week) without your prayers.”

*by Geneva Cobb Iijima, reprinted from Signs of the Times, January 1991
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PROMISES TO CLAIM FOR YOUR CHILDREN

God hears every prayer uttered by faithful parents. Claim His promises as your very own!

“Parents have a great and responsible work to do, and they may well inquire: ‘Who is sufficient for these things?’ But God has promised to give wisdom to those that ask in faith, and He will do just as He said He would. He is pleased with the faith that takes Him at His word. The mother of Augustine prayed for her son’s conversion. She saw no evidence that the Spirit of God was impressing his heart, but she was not discouraged. She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God His own words, and pleaded as only a mother can. Her deep humiliation, her earnest importunities, her unwavering faith, prevailed, and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart. Today He is just as ready to listen to the petitions of His people. His ‘hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear;’ and if Christian parents seek Him earnestly, He will fill their mouths with arguments, and for His name’s sake will work mightily in their behalf in the conversion of their children.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 322, 323)

Isa. 43:5, 6: “Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west; I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’ Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth.”

Isa. 44:3: “For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring.”

Isa. 49:25: “But thus says the Lord: ‘Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible be delivered; for I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children.’”

Isa. 54:13: “All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.”

Isa. 57:18, 19: “‘I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will also lead him, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near,’ says the Lord, ‘and I will heal him.’”

Isa. 59:21: “‘As for Me,’ says the Lord, ‘this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants’ descendants,’ says the Lord, ‘from this time and forevermore.’”

Ps. 72:4: “He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, and will break in pieces the oppressor.”

Ps. 112:1, 2: “Praise the Lord! Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who delights greatly in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed.”

Jer. 31:16, 17: “Thus says the Lord: ‘Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope in your future, says the Lord, that your children shall come back to their own border.’”

Jer. 29:11, 12: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.”

Prov. 14:26: “In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge.”

Prov. 11:21: “Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished; but the posterity of the righteous will be delivered.”

3 John 4: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

Ex. 14:13, 14: “And Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.’”

Joel 2:25: “So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, my great army which I sent among you.”

1 John 5:14-16: “This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him. If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.

Isa. 42:7, 16: “To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon and those who dwell in darkness from the prison [...] I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, In paths they do not know I will guide them. I will make darkness into light before them and rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do, And I will not leave them undone.”

HOW TO GET STARTED PRAYERWALKING

Introduce your church or family to prayerwalking—an outreach ministry that’s perfect for all ages and all personalities. Begin today and blanket your community with prayer!

Join with other believers. Join your faith with others to help prayer flow in an engaging conversational style. Large groups sometimes fail to give everyone a chance to participate. Pairs and triplets work best. (For example, a group of eight could naturally divide into pairs as they walk, but stay in sight of each other or meet back together at a certain location.)

Set aside time. Allowing one or two full hours gives prayer walkers a good chance to manage preliminaries and follow-up discussions, although lots can be done in less time.

Choose an area. Ask God to guide you. It’s best by far to learn the joys of prayerwalking in unfamiliar neighborhoods; you’ll return quickly to your own neighborhood with fresh vision. Centers of commerce and religion are fascinating, but there’s nothing like touching families, schools, and churches in residential areas. Use elevated points of land to pray over an entire neighborhood. Linger at specific sites which seem to be key. When deciding where to go in a new community, you may choose to link up with a Christian ministering in that area so your prayers can be directly related to ministry plans that are being implemented.

Pray with insight. Pray for the people you see. As you do, you might find the Spirit of God recalibrating your heart with His own sensitivities. Enhance these responsive insights with research done beforehand. Use knowledge of past events and current trends to enrich intercession. Above all, pray Scripture. If you have no clear passage to begin with, select just about any of the biblical prayers, and you will find that they almost pray themselves.

Focus on God. Make God’s promises rather than Satan’s schemes the highlight of your prayer. Your discernment of evil powers may sometimes seem to exceed God’s specific guidance for a situation. Consider the simplicity of first making direct appeal to the throne of God before attempting to pick street fights with demonic powers. Seek a restraining order from heaven upon evil so that God’s empowered people may bring forth God’s intended blessings on the city.

Regather and report. Share what you have experienced and prayed. Expressing something of your insights and faith will encourage others, as well as yourself. Set plans for further prayerwalking.

Coordinate efforts. Enlist other praying people to join with friends to cover special areas. As a leader, you may wish to help form and mix prayer bands. Ask prayer walkers to make written notes recording which areas have been covered and what kinds of prayers have been prayed. Pool your insights to ascertain whether God is prompting a repeated focus on particular areas. Eventually aim to cover your entire town or city, unless God guides otherwise.

THEMES FOR PRAYERWALKING

As you pass through a community, try to keep your prayers focused on that specific neighborhood. You will find that your prayers then progress naturally to the nation and the world.

Use a theme passage of Scripture when you go prayerwalking. Unless God guides you to use another passage, try 1 Timothy 2:1-10, which many have found to be a useful launching point for prayerwalking. Verse 8 speaks of the important territorial dimension to prayer connected with God's desire that all people be saved: "I want the men *in every place* to pray" (italics added).

Copy this and other passages in a format easy to read aloud several times during your walk. Each of the following prayer points emerges from this passage.

1 Timothy 2:1-10:

- **Concerning Christ:** Proclaim Him afresh to be the one Mediator and the ransom for all. Name Him Lord of the neighborhood and of the lives you see.
- **Concerning Leaders:** Pray for people responsible in any position of authority—for teachers, police, administrators, and parents.
- **Concerning Peace:** Cry out for the godliness and holiness of God's people to increase into substantial peace. Pray for new churches to be established.
- **Concerning Truth:** Declare openly the bedrock reality that there is one God. Celebrate the faithful revelation of His truth to all peoples through ordinary people (1 Tim. 2:8). Pray that the eyes of minds would cease to be blinded by Satan so that they could come to a knowledge of the truth.
- **Concerning the Gospel:** Praise God for His heart's desire that all people be saved. Ask that heaven would designate this year as a "proper time" for the testimony of Christ to be given afresh with simple power (1 Tim. 2:6). Name specific people.
- **Concerning the Blessing of God:** Thanksgivings are to be made on behalf of all people. Give God the explicit thanks He deserves for the goodness He constantly bestows on the homes you pass by. Ask to see the city with His eyes, that you might sense what is good and pleasing in His sight as well as what things grieve Him deeply. Ask God to bring forth an enduring spiritual awakening.
- **Concerning the Church:** Ask for healing in relationships, that there be no wrath or dissension among God's people. Ask that God would make His people, men and women alike, expressive in worship with the substance of radiant, relational holiness. Ask that our worship would be adorned with the confirming power of saints doing good in our communities.

Taken from:
Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendrick, *Prayerwalking*
(Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 1993), Used by permission.

Lord, Please Give Us _____ for Your Kingdom!
(Name of City/Area)

In preparation for Jesus' soon coming, I will answer the call of Luke 10:2 by—

1. Praying intensely for the spiritual needs of these three people:

2. Asking God to guide me as I cultivate friendships and opportunities to love these people.
3. Praying that they will surrender their lives to Christ and accept His will for their lives.
4. Claiming this Bible promise: "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me" (1 Chron. 4:10; see also 1 John 5:16 and Isa. 42:7, 16).

Please keep this form in your Bible to remind you to pray for these three friends.

Lord, Please Give Us _____ for Your Kingdom!
(Name of City/Area)

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Please keep this form in your Bible to remind you to pray for these three friends.

HOW TO PRAY FOR FRIENDS WHO ARE NOT YET CHRISTIANS

*God is already working in the hearts of your friends and family members.
Here's how you can pray for them.*

1. Pray that God draws them to Himself.

John 6:44: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."

2. Pray that they seek to know God.

Acts 17:27: "God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us."

Deut. 4:29: "But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul."

3. Pray that they believe the Scriptures.

1 Thess. 2:13: "And we also thank God continually because, when you receive the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe."

Rom. 10:17: "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."

4. Pray that Satan is prevented from blinding them to the Truth.

Matt. 13:19: "When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart."

2 Cor. 4:4: "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

5. Pray that the Holy Spirit works in their lives.

John 16:8-13: "When [the Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. . . . he will guide you into all truth."

6. Pray that they believe in Christ as Savior.

John 1:12: "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

John 5:24: "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

7. Pray that they turn from sin.

Acts 17:30: “[God] commands all people everywhere to repent.”

Acts 3:19: “Repent, then and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.”

8. Pray that God sends someone to lead them to Christ.

Matt. 9:37, 38: “Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.’”

9. Pray that they confess Christ as Lord.

Rom. 10:9, 10: “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

10. Pray that they yield all to follow Christ.

2 Cor. 5:15: “And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”

Phil. 3:7, 8: “But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.”

11. Pray that they take root and grow in Christ.

Col. 2:6, 7: “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

Bible verses in this section quoted from NIV (1984 edition)

THAT THEY MAY BE ONE

Principles for Better Relationships

Challenge yourself: Think of the person you like the least.

Now ask yourself: “Why did Jesus come to this world?”

1. Two primary reasons Jesus came to earth:

- a. To reconcile us to the Father by His perfect life and death. (Rom. 3; 2 Cor. 5:7-21)
- b. To reconcile us to each other in perfect agape love relationships (which restore us to the image of God). (John 17:21-23; Eph. 2:13-18)

2. Jesus prayed for our unity: “That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” (John 17:21, NIV, 1984)

3. This is our Lord’s will for us—that we might be one so that the world will believe in Him.

“It’s not the opposition of the world that most endangers the church of Christ. It is the evil cherished in the hearts of believers. . . . On the other hand, the strongest witness that God has sent His Son into the world is the existence of harmony and union among men of varied dispositions who form His church.” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 549)

7 Principles for Better Relationships

1. Intercede in prayer for people instead of trying to change them or trying to do the Holy Spirit’s work yourself.

- a. Claim promises such as these: 1 John 5:16; Isa. 42:7, 16; Acts 26:18; Isa. 65:1; Jer. 24:7; Jer. 3:22; Ezek. 37:2, 3.
- b. As we spend time with the Lord, He may show us we are part of the problem or set a mirror before us so we can see our need for change. (Gal. 6:1-3; Luke 6:37, 38, 41, 42)
- c. Live the fruit of the Spirit and “preach” at others less.
- d. Take action only if the Holy Spirit leads us.

2. Respect diversity of temperaments and God’s created differences in people.

- a. The Lord has created and gifted us differently so the Body of Christ will have all its complementary parts. (Eph. 4:1-32)
- b. Sacredly regard the feelings and respect the rights of those with whom God has placed us in relationship.

“Marked diversities of disposition and character frequently exist in the same family, for it is in the order of God that persons of varied temperament should associate together. When this is the case each member of the household should sacredly regard the feelings and respect the right of the others. By this means, mutual consideration and forbearance will be cultivated, prejudices will be softened, and rough points of character smoothed. Harmony may be secured, and the blending of the varied temperaments may be a benefit to each.”
(*Child Guidance*, p. 205)

3. Assume the best about the motives and actions of others.

- a. Listen more. Seek first to understand clearly and then to be understood. Don't take things secondhand from secondary sources.
- b. “Christlike love places the most favorable construction on the motives and acts of others. It does not needlessly expose their faults; it does not listen eagerly to unfavorable reports, but seeks rather to bring to mind the good qualities of others.” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 319)

4. Follow Christ's specific instructions and do not talk to others about problems.

- a. Only say those things which can be helpful for building others up according to their needs. Even if something is “true,” don't talk to others if it can't help or resolve the problem. (Eph. 4:29-32)
- b. Follow the “gospel order” in all situations:
 - Matt. 18:15-17: When a brother in Christ sins against you—
Go to the person “alone” first.
If needed, take one or two others as witnesses.
Lastly, if needed, take it to the church for discipline.
 - Matt. 5:23, 24: If someone has “aught against you”—
Before you worship, go and seek to be reconciled.
 - Never talk to those who are not part of the situation or solution process.

5. Yield our “rights” and “expectations” to God.

- a. Jesus did not go around defending His rights or getting angry when His expectations weren't met. Many of our relationship problems are caused by our concern for our “rights.”

“Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them” (Ps. 119:165, KJV; see also Luke 6:27-36)
- b. There is a time for “tough love,” but be sure it's the Lord's will, not self-centeredness.

6. Praise God for the source of irritations.

- a. Make a list of the good things about the other person and praise God for those things.
- b. Pray for the “problem person” to be blessed. (Matt. 5:43, 44)
- c. Praise drives evil angels away.

“When things go crossways at your homes, strike up a song about the matchless charms of the Son of God, and I tell you, when you touch this strain, Satan will leave you.” (*Review and Herald*, Aug. 5, 1890)

- d. By beholding we become changed—so dwell on the good. (Phil. 4:4-8)

7. Five minutes can solve most difficulties if pride and self are laid aside!

“I saw that the remnant were not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Stupidity, like lethargy, seemed to hang upon the minds of most of those who profess to believe that we are having the last message. My accompanying angel cried out with awful solemnity, ‘Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come. His wrath is to be poured out, unmixed with mercy, and ye are not ready. Rend the heart, and not the garment. A great work must be done for the remnant. Many of them are dwelling upon little trials.’ Said the angel, ‘Legions of evil angels are around you, and are trying to press in their awful darkness, that ye may be ensnared and taken. Ye suffer your minds to be diverted too readily from the work of preparation and the all-important truths for these last days. And ye dwell upon little trials and go into minute particulars of little difficulties to explain them to the satisfaction of this one or that.’ Conversation has been protracted for hours between the parties concerned, and not only has their time been wasted, but the servants of God are held to listen to them, when the hearts of both parties are unsubdued by grace. **If pride and selfishness were laid aside, five minutes would remove most difficulties.** Angels have been grieved and God displeased by the hours which have been spent in justifying self. I saw that God will not bow down and listen to long justifications, and He does not want His servants to do so, and thus precious time be wasted that should be spent in showing transgressors the error of their ways and pulling souls out of the fire.” (*Early Writings*, pp. 119, 120)

CONTEMPORARY PETER

Lord, do You require more of me than what I am already doing? I'm busy in Your work, yet I am not certain that this is what You have for me to do. Lord, what *more* can I do to serve You better?

Nothing, My child.

But, Lord, why do I feel discontented with my service for You? I give of myself and my money unsparingly. I'm a church deaconess and a Sabbath School teacher. I witness for You. What more can I do for You?

Nothing, My child.

But, Lord, I still have a vacancy inside, despite my hours of service. What more can I do?

*Nothing. Listen, My child: Stop doing things **for** Me.*

What? Now, Lord, let's be reasonable. You've blessed my work for You. You've exhorted me to labor in Your vineyard. What do You mean? What if I do stop doing things for You?

*Then I'll be able to do them **through** you.*

Oh . . . I think I see. Of course, Lord. My work for You is in vain unless You do it through me. Make me a fit channel, Lord. Humble me and make me a worthy vessel for You to use. Now, what task do You want to do through me?

None, My child.

What? You said You'd work through me. What is Your task for me?

My daughter [or son], love Me.

Now wait a minute, Lord. I've been a Christian for many years; what do You mean, "Love Me"? I *do* love You. That's already settled. What is the next step?

There is no other step, loved one; just love Me.

You know I love You, Lord. My whole life is taken up with service to You. What do You mean?

*Your love for **Me** is revealed in your love to your **fellow humans**.*

Oh, I know that, Lord. I do love my fellow humans!

Do you love your biology professor?

Well, I don't hate the guy; I just leave him alone—and he leaves me alone.

Do you love your biology professor?

Now, look, we don't get along. Our personalities clash; I can't solve that, so I avoid him.

I died for him—and live for him too.

I know, Lord. And I would like to see him saved, but You understand—I just don't click with him.

Do you love your biology professor?

Oh, I respect him, and I think he respects me. He is a fine fellow, and I'm sure he'd make a good Christian. But I guess I do think of him as being overconfident and conceited—even a bigot at times. You know his kind, Lord. Why all this about him, Lord? Look at all these other people I love. Why, I could . . .

Do you love your biology professor?

He's the one person, Lord, that I just can't stand. He's pretty hard to take, but I do love . . . I guess everyone else, and certainly, You know I love You.

You only love Me to the extent that you love the person you like the least.

But . . . maybe I really don't care about You then. I've been a Christian all these years. I always thought I loved You. Now I see. Thank You for revealing this to me. I will truly love You now.

You cannot, My child.

But You said "love Me," and when I said "OK," then You . . . I don't understand.

How can you love Me? . . . There is no love in you . . . God is love.

Then I cannot love anyone?

*You are only the **channel** through which I **can love** others.*

Then—

Love this world through me, Lord.

This world of broken men.

Thou didst love through death, Lord:

O, love through me again!

Yes, I will, My child.

We only love God to the extent that we love the person we like the least.

Is this statement too strong? What did Jesus say? "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matt. 25:40).

Thank God for His promise: "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom 5:5). Let Him pour out His love in your life. Ask and you shall receive!

SATAN CALLED A WORLDWIDE MEETING

*Are you too busy to hear the still, small voice of God?
This compelling story may help change your priorities.*

Satan called a worldwide meeting. The huge crowd hushed as he stepped up to speak. "We can't keep the Christians from going to church. We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth. We can't keep them from conservative values, but we can do something else." He paused. Everyone listened.

"We can keep them from forming an intimate, abiding experience in Christ. If they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken. So let them go to church, let them have their conservative lifestyles, but steal their time, so they can't gain that experience in Jesus Christ. This is what I want you to do. Distract them from gaining hold of their Savior and maintaining a vital connection through their day!"

"How shall we do this?" shouted his angels.

"Simple. Keep them busy, busy, busy in the nonessentials of life and invent un-numbered schemes to occupy their minds," he answered.

"Tempt them to spend and spend, then borrow and borrow.

"Keep them from their children. Convince the wives to go to work and the husbands to work six and seven days a week, 10 to 12 hours a day, so they can afford their lifestyles. Tell them they are doing it FOR their children. Hah! That one works well. As their families fragment, soon their homes won't offer an escape from the pressures of work.

"Overstimulate their minds so that they cannot hear the 'still, small voice.' Entice them to play the radio whenever they drive, and to keep the TV, streaming services, smart phones, social media, and text messages going constantly in their homes and whenever they have a moment of rest. This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ.

"Fill their homes with magazines and newspapers. Pound their minds with the news 24 hours a day. Invade their driving moments with billboards. Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, sweepstakes, mail-order catalogs, newsletters, promotional offerings, free products, services, and false hopes.

"Even in their recreation, let them be excessive. Have them return from their recreation exhausted, disquieted, and unprepared for the coming week. Don't let them go out in nature. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, concerts, and movies instead.

"When they meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences and unsettled emotions. Don't let them encourage or uplift each other; keep those who are the gifted encouragers especially busy and worn out.

"And above all, when they get together, keep them from praying for one another. Let them be involved in soulwinning. But crowd their lives with so many good causes that they have no time to seek power from Christ. Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family unity for the good of the cause."

It was quite a convention in the end. And the evil angels went eagerly to their assignments trying to cause Christians everywhere to get busy, busy, busy, and rush here and there.

PRAYER RESOURCES

Prayerfully ask God to show you the best resources for your devotional life and ministry to others.

1. Coon, Glenn	<i>The ABC's of Bible Prayer</i>	R&H
2. Clouzet, Ron	<i>Adventism's Greatest Need</i>	PPPA
3. Clouzet, Ron	<i>In the Name of Jesus – Praying for People and Places</i>	PPPA
4. Engelkemier, Joe	<i>30 Days to More Powerful Intercessory Prayer (Book 2)</i>	PPPA
5. Finley, Mark	<i>Prayer Makes a Difference</i>	Hart Research Center
6. Finley, Mark	<i>Revive Us Again</i>	PPPA
7. Goia, Pavel	<i>In the Spirit and Power</i>	Safeliz
6. Mason, Melody	<i>Daring to Ask for More</i>	PPPA
7. Mason, Melody	<i>Daring to Live By Every Word</i>	PPPA
7. Morneau, Roger	<i>Incredible Answers to Prayer</i>	R&H
8. Morneau, Roger	<i>More Incredible Answers to Prayer</i>	R&H
9. Morneau, Roger	<i>When You Need Incredible Answers to Prayer</i>	R&H
11. Venden, Morris	<i>The Answer Is Prayer</i>	PPPA
12. White, Ellen	<i>Christ's Object Lessons, "Asking To Give", pp. 139-149</i>	PPPA
13. White, Ellen	<i>Education, "Faith and Prayer," pp. 256-261</i>	PPPA
14. White, Ellen	<i>In Heavenly Places, March 1-31, pp. 67-97</i>	PPPA
15. White, Ellen	<i>Mount of Blessings, pp. 86-87</i>	PPPA
16. White, Ellen	<i>Prayer</i>	PPPA
17. White, Ellen	<i>Power of Prayer</i>	Teach Services, Inc.
18. White, Ellen	<i>Steps to Christ, "The Privilege of Prayer", pp. 63-71</i>	PPPA
19.	Most resources available through your local Adventist Book Center (1-800-843-8585)	

RESOURCES FOR A PRAYER MINISTRY

1. Graf, Jonathan & Hinkle, Lani	<i>My House Shall Be a House of Prayer</i>	A Pray! Magazine Book
2. Griend, Alvin J. Vander	<i>The Praying Church Sourcebook</i>	CRC Publication
3. Jacobsen, Ruthie	<i>Establishing a Prayer Ministry</i>	Advent Source
4. Kamstra, Douglas A.	<i>The Praying Church Idea Book</i>	CRC Publications
5. Kidder, S. Joseph	<i>The Big Four</i>	R&H
6. Maxwell, John	<i>Partners In Prayer</i>	Thomas Nelson Publisher
7. Maxwell, Randy	<i>Bring Back the Glory</i>	PPPA
8. Shewmake, Carroll Johnson	<i>When We Pray For Others</i>	R&H
9. Franklin, John	<i>And the Place Was Shaken</i>	Broadman & Holman Publishers
10. Sacks, Cheryl	<i>The Prayer Saturated Church</i>	Navpress Publishing Group

Visit www.revivalandreformation.org for more prayer, Bible study, and witnessing resources.