

Revival & REFORMATION

The Official *United in Prayer* Weekly Blog and World Church Prayer Requests

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Prayer Works

By Richard Constantinescu

I know that prayer works. As a college junior at the turn of the millennium, I had a spinal injury that caused me pain and difficulty. I went to a doctor, but he couldn't help me. All week long my spine hurt so much that I couldn't sit or walk without limping. Each day my pain grew worse and I couldn't work.

I was a literature evangelist in college, earning money while sharing my faith. In a few days, I was supposed to travel to Reno, Nevada, to work with a group of other literature evangelists. I knew I wouldn't be able to walk from door to door. Why hadn't God healed me so I could work and save souls?

I suddenly remembered Mark 11:24, a verse I had memorized. Christ promised, "Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." I decided to claim this promise. I thought that if God wanted me to do His work, it was His responsibility to heal me so I could. If He chose not to, I wouldn't worry any more about it. I was ready to accept His will, and I knelt to claim the promise in my empty dormitory room.

I told God of my pain and that I wanted to work for Him. I told Him I believed He could heal me according to Mark 11:24, and that I depended on Him. I asked, according to His will, that He would heal me in the name of Jesus. After a simple prayer, I said, "Amen."

As soon as I said "Amen," I felt a hand touch my right shoulder from behind, and a healing power went down my spine to the soles of my feet. I stood to my feet, and my pain was completely gone. I ran from door to door that day with my books!

Yes, prayer works. While I was studying at the seminary, my wife was pregnant with our first child. We were both very busy and needed our sleep while we were in ministry and school. Before the birth, we knelt and prayed that our baby would sleep well at night—not for our own benefit, but so we could continue working efficiently and healthfully for God.

God mightily answered that prayer! Our firstborn child slept an average of 11 hours a night. Sometimes she would sleep 14 hours, and we were afraid she wouldn't wake up! We prayed the same prayer for the rest of our three children. They all slept an average of 11 hours a night. We truly do not know what it is like to stay up at night with babies!

Yes, prayer works. One day while at the seminary, I needed to buy some items for my wife and child. I only had two dollars and some change. As a husband and father, I felt bad that I wasn't able to provide more for my family. I remembered the Bible promise in Philippians

4:19: “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” I remembered 1 Timothy 5:8, which says that “if any man does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith.”

I thought, *‘If God is my Father, won’t He provide for me also?’* I knelt and said a simple prayer: “Father, You promised to provide for all my needs in Philippians 4:19. I need to provide for my family, and I have no money to do that. You said that if anyone doesn’t provide for their household, they deny the faith. You are my Father, and You know how to provide for Your family. I am part of Your household, and You always keep Your own Word. Please provide for me today so I can provide for my family. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

That evening after I finished working at the university print shop, we took our small income and drove toward the cheapest grocery store in town to buy just a couple of things. It was sunset, and a college student on a bicycle two sizes too small asked for directions to the healthier, more expensive, food store in town.

I began giving directions but decided that since it was getting dark, I would just put her bicycle in our van and drive her there. It was only a mile away, but we couldn’t afford gasoline to drive her to the store, then drive the extra mile back to the less expensive store. We decided to buy what we could at the more expensive store—the store we had specifically avoided.

As we walked into the brightly lit store, a woman stopped us between the produce and aisle section of the store. She was a member of a small Bible study group that I led. After a short greeting she said, “It’s good to see you! I’ve been wanting to give you this!” and slipped something in the front pocket of my work shirt. I thanked her, not knowing what it was, and we parted ways. When I looked to see what was in my shirt pocket, I saw a crisp, folded \$100 bill. We felt like the wealthiest people! We praised God and began placing vegetables, fruits, cereals, and all we needed in our cart. Our thanksgiving and joy could not be measured!

After we finished our shopping, we stood in line with our baby girl to pay. A friendly man standing two places behind us started a conversation with us. He asked where I worked, and I told him. He said he was visiting town for his daughter’s graduation and that this was his first time here. He asked me how seminary was. He answered his own question and said, “It’s hard, isn’t it?” I thought maybe I didn’t look like a very good student, so I didn’t know how to respond. He reached forward and said, “I mean financially,” and placed something into the same pocket of my plaid work shirt that the other woman had. I thanked him, not knowing what it was. When I paid for the groceries, I saw a second, crisp, folded \$100 bill identical to the first one. What a miracle!

When I had claimed God’s promises earlier that day, He sent the college student on the bike for us to help, which redirected me to the store to which we would not have otherwise gone, and then He gave us \$100 twice in the same shirt pocket—half of which was from complete stranger we never saw again! God is a mighty God! He is so kind, good, and loving!

Yes, I know that prayer works. There is nothing sweeter than talking to God and having Him answer through His Word, Spirit, and abundant providences.

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World Church Prayer Requests

December 18 - 24, 2020

- Pray for God's blessing over the new Adventist World Radio online evangelistic series titled "Earth's Final Countdown," with AWR president Duane McKey. This series will run through March 2021.
- Praying for the upcoming world wide AWR 360 baptismal event to take place this Sabbath, December 26th, in response to outreach initiatives of Adventist World Radio. Pray for God to lead and protect all those that are making the decision to be baptized.
- Please continue to pray for church members in Nigeria caught up in difficult times. Pray for peace for the government, and that God's children will shine as lights for Jesus in the midst of tumultuous times.
- Pray for this week's *Adventist Mission* unreached people group, the 7 million Harare Oromo in Ethiopia. Jesus wants to come again, but the gospel must first go to all the world! Pray with us that millions in this people group can come to know Jesus! We invite you to share this prayer request with your family, friends, and church community! "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." (James 5:16)