

# Revival & REFORMATION

The Official *United in Prayer* Weekly Blog and World Church Prayer Requests  
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## Unexpected Power – Part II

By Zachary Page

*[If you missed the first part of Zac's testimony, please see last week's United in Prayer blog.]*

A year and a half later, my wife and I moved across the country so that I could attend the master of divinity program at the Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. I had dreams of being radically transformed during our time there as I continued to spend time in God's presence, but honestly, I did not expect it to come through the classes. However, as Dr. Allan Walshe began to introduce, during my first class, the subject of biblical spirituality, I realized that this was going to be different from what I expected and exactly what I needed. Now I was receiving practical tools to accomplish the purpose God had set before me of seeking His presence.

The course focused on experiencing spiritual transformation through daily Bible reading, prayer, and journaling. Each day, our homework required us to intentionally focus on drawing closer to God through Bible study and prayer and to reflect on this through journaling. We were also expected to choose one classmate to meet with on a weekly basis in order to ask specific questions about our personal spiritual growth over the past week. This was an incredibly transformational experience for me as I began to meet with my good friend, Godfrey Miranda.

One day during my first semester of seminary, I was deeply challenged as I read how Martin Luther, "besides his constant reading of the Word of God, did not pass a day without devoting three hours at least to prayer, and they were hours selected from those the most favorable to study."

Three hours in prayer? This was while his writings were under the most intense scrutiny and he was most in need of ably defending his work. I read on, "From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation." (Great Controversy, p. 210) That was exactly what I felt my ministry had been missing: power!

I did not want to just continue on for the next 30 to 40 years, pastoring with humdrum results, only to finally retire without ever seeing God's power unleashed for the mighty revival and reformation He has promised. So, I determined that I, too, needed to spend at least three hours each day alone with God.

This sounded great, but there was a huge practical problem. Where was I to find three hours to spare in the midst of a full-time MDiv course load? I was not in the habit of waking up early enough for this each morning. I realized that I did not have the strength for this, so

I asked God to do as He has promised to do in Isaiah 50:4, to wake me up morning by morning. Do not pray this prayer unless you seriously want God to do it!

As God began waking me up earlier and earlier, I still had a problem. I could not stay awake.

One day, I mentioned this to my friend Godfrey as we were discussing our spiritual growth. He suggested that I try drinking several glasses of water when I first woke up. This definitely helped.

Soon I began to learn some other simple things that also helped keep me alert, like jumping out of bed immediately when God first fully woke me up. If I hesitated, I found that I would drift off to sleep, and when I woke up the second time, I was usually far more tired than I had been earlier.

There were other things that helped me too. The biggest help came from making a habit of going to bed by nine o'clock at night. I have found the early morning hours are far more inviting when I have slept about three hours before midnight.

Truly, in His "presence is fullness of joy" (Ps. 16:11). The more that I have come to recognize this, the more delightful every sacrifice has become that furthers the purpose of drawing closer to God's infinite heart of love!

At one point, I realized I had been willing to change my diet to a strictly plant-based diet in order to have more energy for a particular sport as a teenager. Why was I not willing to do the same in order to have energy to seek a deeper relationship with Jesus? This bothered me. So, I took it to God and asked Him to change my appetite as I surrendered it to Him. Now I had a new inspiration for eating healthfully. It was no longer about me not getting cancer or dying young but about having energy to enjoy God's presence. I have found this motivation to be far longer-lasting than the selfish focus of the diet changes I have undergone in the past.

I listened as Dr. Dwight Nelson, pastor of Pioneer Memorial Church, spoke about the importance of spending time with God. I felt pretty smug and confident as he came toward his appeal. I figured I was safe. He would not appeal that we spend more than three hours alone with God, would he? God has a way of humbling us and of opening our eyes to His desire for greater things than we can fathom. Dr. Nelson went on to appeal that we double our time alone with God. Surely that was impossible! That semester I was overloading on credits, and I just could not see that this was feasible. But I felt compelled to make the commitment.

Why am I so apt to limit God? Joshua called out to God, and He held the solar system in place for 24 hours so that the battle could be completed. God is able to create the time that we need when we put Him first. As we are told, "The Lord can do more in one hour than we can do in a whole lifetime" (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, 347).

That semester, it was delightful to witness how God was capable of handling all of my projects and assignments. And He did it with far better results than I could have on my own with those extra three hours.

[Part III of testimony to come next week!]

*Zachary Page is pastor at Templeton Hills SDA Church, in Templeton, California. He and his wife, Leah, have been married 13 years and are enjoying life and ministry together with their twin two-year-old daughters. This testimony was originally featured in Ministry Magazine.*

## **World Church Prayer Requests**

April 23 - 29, 2021

- Pray for refugees trapped in difficult living conditions in refugee camps around the Middle East and Europe. Pray for refugees who have migrated into our own neighborhoods. Pray that God would give us wisdom to know how to minister to them in practical and personal ways, for His glory.
- Pray for “Centers of Influence” being developed in cities around the world. Pray for the Mission to the Cities initiative, and for workers to answer the call to serve. There are still so many large urban areas with no Adventist presence.
- Pray for the Middle East and North Africa Union (MENA) and for the difficult work in this region. Pray for the Holy Spirit to open doors and hearts.
- Pray for God’s Spirit to be poured out on members in the Euro-Asia Division as they seek to share their faith. The work in the region of the former Soviet Union remains extremely challenging.