

Day Seven – Clean Hands, Pure Heart

Suggested Format for United Prayer

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).

Praise

- Praise God that forgiveness is one of the core aspects of His character (Exodus 34:6, 7.)
- *“For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy” (Psalm 86:5).*
- How have you seen God at work today? Praise Him for what He is doing.

Confession

- Take time to privately ask God to search your heart and reveal any sin separating Him from you. As God reveals sins, claim His forgiveness (1 John 1:9).
- Is there an area in your life that has been a stronghold of the devil? If so, open your Bible to Psalm 51 and silently pray through it in repentance so that God can grant you victory over this sin.
- Silently ask God’s forgiveness for being unwilling to forgive others.
- Is there anyone in your life that you need to forgive? Ask forgiveness for being unwilling to forgive and listen so God can show you how to make things right. Write down what He is asking you to do.

Supplication and Intercession

- Claim the Holy Spirit, who is promised in the wake of repentance. *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38, 39).*
- Pray for brotherly kindness in all our relationships. *“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).*
- Ask God for reconciliation, healing, and unity in all broken relationships, including: 1) parents and children, and other family, 2) friends—both between church members and with people who do not know Jesus yet, and 3) church leadership and lay members.
- Pray for unity in the church to be based on the Word of God.
- Plead for unity to characterize all our organizations, schools, evangelistic outreaches, supporting ministries, and churches. Especially pray for your home church to be unified. Pray through Jesus’ prayer in John 17, especially verses 20 and 21.
- MTTC: For God to prepare people’s hearts and draw them to Himself. For any prejudice against Adventists in the 630 cities to be broken down. For Adventists to demonstrate God’s love to all.
- Join one or two others to intercede for your five and those on an intercession card. Pray promises for these individuals. Especially pray for them to experience forgiveness and to forgive others.
- Pray for other requests that may be on your heart.

Thanksgiving

- Thank God for His gift of forgiveness. *“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:2).*
- Thank God for the ways He is working in answer to prayer.

Suggested Songs to Sing

“Come, Holy Spirit”; “Whiter Than Snow” (SDAH #318); “Jesus Saves” (SDAH #340); “Redeemed” (SDAH #337, 338); “The Blood That Jesus Shed”; “Nothing But the Blood of Jesus”; “Create in Me a Clean Heart.”

Ellen White on the Lord's Prayer

"Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us."—Luke 11:4.

Jesus teaches that we can receive forgiveness from God only as we forgive others. It is the love of God that draws us unto Him, and that love cannot touch our hearts without creating love for our brethren.

After completing the Lord's Prayer, Jesus added: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." He who is unforgiving cuts off the very channel through which alone he can receive mercy from God. We should not think that unless those who have injured us confess the wrong we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness. It is their part, no doubt, to humble their hearts by repentance and confession; but we are to have a spirit of compassion toward those who have trespassed against us, whether or not they confess their faults. However sorely they may have wounded us, we are not to cherish our grievances and sympathize with ourselves over our injuries; but as we hope to be pardoned for our offenses against God we are to pardon all who have done evil to us.

But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He "will abundantly pardon," He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:7-9. God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10. And again he says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12.

God in Christ gave Himself for our sins. He suffered the cruel death of the cross, bore for us the burden of guilt, "the just for the unjust," that He might reveal to us His love and draw us to Himself. And He says, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you." Ephesians 4:32, R.V. Let Christ, the divine Life, dwell in you and through you reveal the heaven-born love that will inspire hope in the hopeless and bring heaven's peace to the sin-stricken heart. As we come to God, this is the condition which meets us at the threshold, that, receiving mercy from Him, we yield ourselves to reveal His grace to others.

The one thing essential for us in order that we may receive and impart the forgiving love of God is to know and believe the love that He has to us. 1 John 4:16. Satan is working by every deception he can command, in order that we may not discern that love. He will lead us to think that our mistakes and transgressions have been so grievous that the Lord will not have respect unto our prayers and will not bless and save us. In ourselves we can see nothing but weakness, nothing to recommend us to God, and Satan tells us that it is of no use; we cannot remedy our defects of character. When we try to come to God, the enemy will whisper, It is of no use for you to pray; did not you do that evil thing? Have you not sinned against God and violated your own conscience? But we may tell the enemy that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. When we feel that we have sinned and cannot pray, it is then the time to pray. Ashamed we may be and deeply humbled, but we must pray and believe. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Timothy 1:15. Forgiveness, reconciliation with God, comes to us, not as a reward for our works, it is not bestowed because of the merit of sinful men, but it is a gift unto us, having in the spotless righteousness of Christ its foundation for bestowal.

We should not try to lessen our guilt by excusing sin. We must accept God's estimate of sin, and that is heavy indeed. Calvary alone can reveal the terrible enormity of sin. If we had to bear our own guilt, it would crush us. But the sinless One has taken our place; though undeserving, He has borne our iniquity. "If we confess our sins," God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Glorious truth!—just to His own law, and yet the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus. "Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy." Micah 7:18.