

10 Days of Prayer 2016

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Introduction

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2016! Ten years have passed since the church started to pray for ten days at the beginning of each year. God has worked many miracles in these prayer events. The Holy Spirit has wrought revival, conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, and healed relationships. Truly, prayer is the birthplace of revival!

We believe your life and the lives of those you pray for will be changed as you join fellow church members in praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, whom the Father has promised to give to those who ask Him. Read the responses of those who participated in the last Ten Days of Prayer:

“The power of the Holy Spirit is working through in our church. Some of our backsliders are coming back to church, plus some of our members are making a total commitment this 2015 to walk with the Lord. Thank you and God bless all of you.” *Joe Kin, Kanudi SDA Church, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea*

“God is blessing immensely as our church is gathering to pray during these ten days of prayer. There’s a young man who has not been in church for a long time. His wife came to the prayer gathering Friday night, and the group joined her in praying for her husband to return to church. On Sabbath morning he was there! We praise God for how He is working in our midst!” *Peggy Casebier, Oregon, USA*

“The Ten Days of Prayer revived Southend SDA Church and Friday prayer meetings, which no longer existed in my church. This ten-day session taught us that the power rests in prayer and brought unity amongst church members and a zeal to work for the Lord.” *Tafadzwa Katsota, Southend SDA Church, Zimbabwe*

“We did our ten days from January 1-10. Our pastor, Bill McClendon, had a protective prayer for everyone involved on the prayer list. That very day, January 7, I was in traffic going to work and the car in the center lane took off in the messed-up snow lane and began to spin over and over again, finally stopping in my lane, facing my car. His car stopped about two feet in front of mine. I said, “Thank you, Jesus!” He saw my face and then tried to turn his car around and then took off. A tow truck behind me expected business from this car, but there was none! I called our pastor at church and told him what happened. God is with us all the time; I personally know this forever.” *Charmaine Ridgely, Baltimore First SDA Church, Ellicott City, Maryland, USA*

“I am grateful to our heavenly Father. He did something special. I had my young brother (age 10) who had heart problems, and doctors decided to undergo heart surgery in India. When I started to pray for him, he recovered very quickly, within a few days. Meanwhile, the doctors were estimating that he would recover after two weeks. God decided to save his life once again, and tomorrow he will be back from India. I am still waiting for great things to happen in the remaining days.” *Yoel Asaph, Mwanza, Tanzania*

Our Prayer Theme: Abiding in Christ—Life More Abundant

During the Ten Days of Prayer 2016, we will be praying for the Holy Spirit to teach us how we can abide in Christ and receive the “life more abundant.” The apostle Paul challenges believers to “be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18), “that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:16-19).

“‘Abide in Me, and I in you.’ Abiding in Christ means a constant receiving of His Spirit, a life of unreserved surrender to His service. The channel of communication must be open continually between man and his God. As the vine branch constantly draws the sap from the living vine, so are we to cling to Jesus, and receive from Him by faith the strength and perfection of His own character” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 676).

“To ‘abide in me, and I in you’ is a possible thing to do, and the invitation would not be given if you could not do this. Jesus our Saviour is constantly drawing you by His Holy Spirit, working with your mind that you will abide with Christ. . . . The blessings He bestows are all connected with your own individual action. Shall Christ be refused? He says, ‘Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out’ (John 6:37). Of another class He says, ‘Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life’ (John 5:40)” (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 55).

We need the Spirit daily in our lives so that we can abide in Christ, experience a life more abundant, and share it with the lost sons and daughters of God. During these ten days we would like to take time to reflect on why and how we need to abide in Christ and what consequences will this have for ourselves and others. Let us pray together that God will teach us “this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

Suggested Guidelines for the Prayer Times

- Keep your prayers short—just a sentence or two on one topic. Then give others a turn. You can pray as many times as you’d like, just as you talk in a conversation.
- Silence is good, as it gives everyone time to listen to the Holy Spirit.
- Singing songs together as the Spirit leads is also a huge blessing. You do not need a piano for this; singing acapella is fine.
- Rather than using up valuable prayer time talking about your prayer requests, simply pray them. Then others can also pray for your requests and claim promises for your need.

Claiming the Promises

God has given us many promises in His Word. It is our privilege to claim them in our prayers. All His commandments and counsels are also promises. He would never ask from us something that we could not do in His strength.

When we pray it is so easy to focus on our needs, our difficulties, our challenges—and to wail and whine about our situation. This is not the purpose of prayer. Prayer is meant to strengthen our faith. That is why we encourage you to claim God’s promises in your prayer time. They will help you take your eyes off yourself and your weaknesses and set them on Jesus. It is by beholding Him that we become changed into His image.

“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” (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 71).

“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).

How can you claim His promises? For instance, when praying for peace, you can claim John 14:27 and say, “Lord, You have told us in Your Word, ‘Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.’ Give me the peace that You promised to leave with us.” Thank the Lord that He is giving you peace, even though you may not feel it right then and there.

We have created a document, “Promises to Claim in Prayer,” with different promises that you can claim. Have the promises nearby when you pray. Claim God’s promises in your private and public prayers.

Fasting

We encourage you to do a Daniel Fast during these ten days. Starting the year with prayer and fasting is a great way to consecrate our lives to God for the upcoming year. Ellen White tells us, “Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of their Leader. They should set aside days for fasting and prayer. Entire abstinence from food may not be required, but they should eat sparingly of the most simple food” (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 188, 189).

We know about Daniel, who ate fruits and vegetables for 10 days. We likewise encourage you to adopt a very simple diet during these ten days. A simple diet that leaves out sugar, processed and refined foods, and sodas can benefit us on

different levels. First, eating simply means less time needed to prepare food and more time available to spend with the Lord. Second, the more simple our diet, the easier it is for the stomach to digest it, and the clearer our minds will be. We all know that sugar beclouds the frontal lobe, the center of our thinking. If we want clearer minds for hearing God's voice, and if we want to draw closer to Him, we need to make sure that our diet is not hindering us.

We are told, "Guard jealously your hours for prayer, Bible study, and self-examination" (*Gospel Workers*, p. 100). In addition to giving us clear minds, fasting will help us to search our hearts.

Fasting is not only about abstaining from food. We also encourage you to fast from TV, movies, computer games, and even Facebook and YouTube. Sometimes things that are not bad in themselves, like Facebook and YouTube, can take so much of our time. Put aside everything possible so you can have more time to spend with the Lord.

Fasting is about avoiding everything that hinders us from drawing closer to God in prayer and Bible study. We are told that "the spirit of true fasting and prayer is the spirit which yields mind, heart, and will to God" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1148).

Fasting is not a fast way to obtain a miracle from God. Fasting is all about humbling ourselves so God can work in us and through us. "For certain things fasting and prayer are recommended and appropriate. In the hand of God they are a means of cleansing the heart and promoting a receptive frame of mind. We obtain answers to our prayers because we humble our souls before God" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 283).

Let's humble ourselves before God and search for Him with all our heart, mind, and strength. Let's draw closer to Him through prayer and fasting, and He will draw closer to us.

Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you how or what you should pray for in a person's life or in a particular situation. The Bible tells us that we do not know what to pray for and that the Holy Spirit is the One making intercession for us.

"We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit 'maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.' Romans 8:26. Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer 'exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.' Ephesians 3:20" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147).

Faith

We are told in the Spirit of Prophecy that "prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 509). We are also encouraged to pray and have faith that God heard and will answer our prayer.

'Christ says, 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' In these words, Christ gives us direction as to how we should pray. We are to come to our heavenly Father with the simplicity of a child, asking Him for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says again, 'When ye pray, believe that ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.' You are to come to the Father repenting and confessing your sins, emptying the soul of every sin and defilement, and it is your privilege to prove the promises of the Lord. . . . We are to believe the word of God; for the test of character is found in the fact that you are building yourselves up in the most holy faith. You are proved of God through the word of God. You are not to wait for wonderful emotions before you believe that God has heard you; feeling is not to be your criterion, for emotions are as changeable as the clouds. . . . While on earth, we can have help from Heaven. . . . for I have tested God a thousand times. I will walk out by faith, I will not dishonor my Saviour by unbelief" (*Review and Herald*, Oct. 11, 1892, par. 1, 3, 6).

"We have too little faith. We limit the Holy One of Israel. We should be grateful that He 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).

We are also told that “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). So make a habit of thanking God in advance through faith for what He is going to do and how He is going to answer your prayers.

Pray for Seven

We encourage you to pray during these ten days in a special way for seven people whom you would like to see experiencing a “life more abundant.” They can be relatives, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or simply acquaintances. Take some time and ask God whom would He like you to pray for. Ask Him also to give you a real burden for these people.

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