

Praying for Rain

A MINI-HANDBOOK
FOR UNITED PRAYER



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Why Pray for Rain?

“Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.” Zech. 10:1

“Let Christians ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the former rain, and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant.” *Evangelism*, p. 701

“If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chron. 7:14

“There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation.” *Messages to Young People*, p. 133

“We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the Day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today. Moral darkness, like a funeral pall, covers the earth. All manner of false doctrines,

heresies, and satanic deceptions are misleading the minds of men. Without the Spirit and power of God it will be in vain that we labor to present the truth." *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 158

"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. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. . . . [It] is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer." *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 121

"God has instructed me that our workers need to experience the deep moving of the Spirit of God; many are in need of a fuller conversion. On the day of Pentecost, in response to the continued prayers of the disciples, the Holy Spirit descended from heaven with the sound as of a rushing mighty wind. For ages the heavenly influences had been held in restraint; but in response to the fervent prayers of these humble men, they descended with power to co-operate with human agencies. Then what confessions came forth from human lips, what humiliation of soul was manifested. And what songs of praise and thanksgiving mingled with the voice of penitence and confession. All heaven bent to listen to the lowly seekers after God." *The Kress Collection*, p. 31

“A chain of earnest, praying believers should encircle the world. Let all pray in humility. . . . Let those who cannot leave home gather in their children, and unite in learning to pray together. . . . In response to the prayers of God’s people, angels are sent with heavenly blessings.” *Reflecting Christ*, p. 121

Why United Prayer?

“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

“We are encouraged to pray for success, with the divine assurance that our prayers will be heard and answered. . . . The promise is made on the 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.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 303 (Letter 32, 1903, p. 5)

“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.” *Evangelism*, p. 414

“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 more fervent than in those early days.” *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 161

“Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” Acts 2:1

“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

“And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands became heavy. . . . And Aaron and Hur supported his hands.” Exod. 17:11, 12

“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 that several Christians meet together and unite with earnestness their petitions to God.” *In Heavenly Places*, p. 91

“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 of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, p. 294

“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.” Acts 1:14

The goal of united prayer is to come into one accord so the Holy Spirit can fill us. In addition, we’ve been instructed to pray unitedly so God’s power can be unleashed and the Great Controversy finally ended.

What Is United Prayer?

If it is your desire to bring united prayer to your family, friends, and church members, this handbook will help you get started. This model works well for groups as small as two or as large as hundreds and may be implemented in nearly any setting.

The Holy Spirit ultimately leads the flow of the prayer session; however, because God is a God of order, we try to lead united prayer in an organized manner. After a few instructions and introductory words, the prayer leader begins leading the group through four prayer themes. The following time breakdown is suggested for a one-hour prayer session, but feel free to rearrange the format/order as the Holy Spirit leads.

Welcome/Introduction: 5 Minutes

Adoration/Praise: 10 minutes

Confession: 5-10 minutes

Supplication: 20 minutes

Thanksgiving: 5-10 minutes

While the prayer leader usually opens and closes the prayer time and makes transitions from one theme to the next, the leader does *not* do all the praying. This is *united* prayer, and the goal is to have as many people pray as desire. To make this easier, and to avoid long prayers, we encourage a conversational approach where people take turns praying brief prayers—a few sentences, or one subject, at a time.

Again, the outline we suggest in this booklet is just *one way* to pray unitedly with others. It is not the only method for group prayer, neither should it be followed strictly as a form. Be open for the Holy Spirit to lead.

How to Begin United Prayer

Before starting an hour, or any amount of time, in united prayer, we briefly explain how united prayer typically flows so that those present understand. As you become more experienced at leading, you will develop your own method of communicating this information. Again, this is just to get you started. Be open to adjusting and adapting your prayer meeting format as God leads.

1. **Our prayer time is based on four biblical themes.**

Adoration and Praise: God tells us to enter His courts with praise. Thus, during this first theme, our focus is praise and adoration. Rather than rushing right into our requests, we want to take time to worship God and reflect on the beauty of His character as revealed in His Word. Inspiration tells us that as we learn to praise God more, we will be given more blessings for which to praise Him.

Confession: Confession is a very important aspect of an effective prayer life. It also helps keep the channels open between us and God (Isa. 59:1, 2; 1 John 1:9). Of course, many sins are of a private nature and should be confessed silently between you and God. (A time for silent confession is encouraged.) For those faults that are confessed publicly (Jas. 5:16), keep in mind that we don't want to confess something that would cause

another to stumble (for example, specific lustful acts or thoughts, sexual sins, etc.). In Dan. 9:4-16, we see Daniel's example of corporate confession on behalf of God's people. This is the type of confession that we'd like to focus on during this prayer time. However, the most important thing is to confess, silently or publicly, as the Holy Spirit convicts. (For more inspiration on confession, see page 29.)

Supplication: Here we take God at His Word and give Him our needs, both physical and spiritual. He tells us to ask, seek, and knock (Matt. 7:7), and He tells us that we do not have because we do not ask (Jas. 4:2). So let's take Him at His Word and ask! We aren't to ask only for ourselves either. We are to ask that we may bless others. God tells us to ask large things of Him! Our greatest need is that of the Holy Spirit, so let this be the major focus of our supplication.

Rather than taking prayer requests before the prayer time, we encourage you to give your requests to God during our time of supplication, and we will agree with you in prayer (Matt. 18:19).

Thanksgiving: We end with thanksgiving, praising God for what He's done and looking forward in faith to what He will do. "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20).

2. **Please follow the prayer leader.** The leader will begin and end the prayer, as well as transition the group from one theme to the next.
3. **You may pray multiple times, but keep each prayer brief** (2-3 sentences or a complete thought) and focus on a single theme at a time (praise, supplication, etc.). Then allow others the opportunity to pray.
4. **We pray conversationally, as a group in “one accord.”** Take turns voicing your prayers as the Holy Spirit leads. If you just want to listen or pray silently, that’s fine too.
5. **Please speak up when you pray.** This allows the group to hear you and agree with you in prayer.
6. **Claim a Bible verse, or sing a song during prayer.** If God brings a song to mind, feel free to start singing, and the others will join in. We are told that “singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer” (*Child Guidance*, p. 523). There’s nothing so beautiful as a prayer session where the group bursts into united song and praise!
7. **Ask God to inspire your prayers.** “We must not only pray in Christ’s name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 147).
8. **Finally, as we begin, let’s press together in**

a close circle. It's easier to hear each other's prayers, and it also promotes a spirit of unity among us. And that's what we want. If we are going to be family in heaven some day, we might as well start acting like family here.

Note to prayer leader: During the prayer time, you may wish to claim an appropriate Bible verse or begin a song that others can join you in singing. Uniting in song as you move from one theme to the next is a special way of drawing the group closer together in worship and praise. When thinking of songs, we recommend that you choose simple, familiar songs that most people know. This eliminates the need for hymnals and the risk of losing the attitude of reverence while participants fumble for the correct page number.

We have some suggested songs and verses for your convenience and inspiration on pages 9-14.

Adoration and Praise

Song Ideas to Begin Prayer Time: "Whisper a Prayer in the Morning," "As We Come to You in Prayer," "Sanctuary," "Open Our Eyes, Lord," "Into My Heart," "Change My Heart, O God," "Nearer, Still Nearer," "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus."

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name." Ps. 100:4

“Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. . . . Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.” Ps. 95:2, 6

“I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. . . . Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.” Ps. 34:1, 3

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” Rev. 4:8

“Praise the Lord, saying, ‘For His mercy endures forever.’” 2 Chron. 7:6

“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!” Ps. 150:6

Adoration Songs: “I Love You, Lord,” “Holy, Holy, Holy,” “Open Our Eyes, Lord,” “Holy Ground,” “God So Loved the World,” “Into My Heart,” “As the Deer,” “How Great Thou Art,” “His Name Is Wonderful,” “Blessed Assurance.”

Confession

“If my people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chron. 7:14

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.” Isa. 59:1, 2

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.” Ps. 66:18

“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.” Jas. 5:16

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” Ps. 103:12

Confession Songs: “Amazing Grace,” “Thank You, Lord,” “Create in Me a Clean Heart,” “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” “He Lives,” “Power in the Blood,” “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus,” “Roll, Roll Your Burdens Away,” “Have Thine Own Way Lord,” “Redeemed.”

Supplication

“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

“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

“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.” Matt. 7:7, 8

“Yet you do not have because you do not ask. . . . Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” Jas. 4:2; John 16:24

“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

“Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for you.” Jer. 32:17

Supplication Songs: “He’s Able,” “God Is So Good,” “In His Time,” “Seek Ye First,” “Make Me a Servant,” “Let Your Heart Be Broken,” “Whisper a Prayer,” “Showers of Blessing,” “’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus.”

Thanksgiving

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” Eph. 3:20

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases.” Ps. 103:2, 3

“Before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.” Isa. 65:24

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. . . . Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . . But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Heb. 10:23; 11:1, 6

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Rom. 8:28

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” Phil. 4:6

Thanksgiving Songs: “To God Be the Glory,” “Surely the Presence of the Lord Is in This Place,” “He Lives,” “I Sing the Mighty Power of God,”

“Take My Life and Let It Be,” “Sweet Hour of Prayer,” “Spirit of the Living God,” “Showers of Blessing.”

Faith Verses for Prayer

“According to your faith let it be to you.” Matt. 9:29

“Is anything too hard for the Lord?” Gen. 18:14

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.” 2 Chron. 16:9

“Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.” Ps. 81:10

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.” Ps. 20:7

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Pet. 3:9

“The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace. . . . If God is for us, who can be against us?” Ex. 14:14; Rom. 8:31

“As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice. He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle that was against me.” Ps. 55:16-18

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.” Matt. 18:20

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Rom. 10:17

“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

“With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.” Mark 10:27

“Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” Mark 11:24

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” John 20:29

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day,

and having done all, to stand. . . . praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.” Eph. 6:12, 13, 18

“By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature.” 2 Pet. 1:4

“He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.” 1 Thess. 5:24

“But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” Matt. 24:13

How to Close United Prayer

At the close of the prayer session, the leader should encourage those present to continue in prayer in the following ways:

1. Encourage those present to make united prayer (in some form) a regular part of their lives. Share a copy of this mini-handbook with them, if possible, so they can teach others.
2. Stress the importance of perseverance in prayer if we want to share the experience of the disciples in the upper room.
3. Encourage people to share their testimony with others if they were blessed by united

prayer. This will help more people want to join in the future.

4. Most importantly, remind participants to follow through on the convictions that God laid on their hearts during the prayer time, no matter how difficult those convictions may be. We can pray, but if we continue in the same sinful, selfish ways after the prayer is over, what gain is there?
5. Finally, encourage all who are able to visit www.revivalandreformation.org to find many fresh prayer resources, Day of Prayer and Fasting programs, and revival resources. People may also share prayer testimonies online to encourage church members worldwide.

Additional Tips for Prayer Leaders

This section includes advice to prepare you for your role and help you avoid some potential pitfalls.

Prepare Your Heart

It is critical that you, as the prayer leader, be prepared and come to the prayer session with a heart emptied of self and filled with the Holy Spirit. The one who waits to prepare until the last minute will not be as effective as the one who comes to the prayer session after having spent quality time in the presence of God.

“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*, p. 260, 261

“Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted and the health of the soul be

preserved. . . . Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God.” *Messages to Young People*, p. 249

Model Reverence

When we pray, we are approaching the throne room of the King of the Universe. Lead others by your example to behave reverently in both word and manner. We encourage kneeling but understand that circumstances may require some to sit in a chair.

“True reverence for God is inspired by a sense of His infinite greatness and a realization of His presence. . . . The hour and place of prayer are sacred, because God is there. . . . Angels, when they speak that name, veil their faces. With what reverence, then, should we, who are fallen and sinful, take it upon our lips!” *Prayer*, p. 209

Let the Holy Spirit Lead

The prayer leader naturally feels the responsibility to lead and keep things moving. However, as already stated, each prayer session is a group conversation with God, and as such, we must expect the occasional lull in conversation. These periods of silence may feel awkward, but they are not to be feared.

The Holy Spirit uses these times to speak to hearts. Also, it may be during these moments that

the more timid find the opportunity to pray. As a leader, resist the urge to dominate by jumping in immediately to keep the prayer time moving. Allow the Holy Spirit to work and dictate the pace.

Pray More, Talk Less

Satan is thrilled if he can keep us talking about our problems instead of praying about them. With this in mind, we discourage people from sharing their requests before the united prayer session begins. Instead, we encourage those present to simply voice their petitions to God during the time of supplication.

“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.” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 188

Keep Individual Prayers Short

It's important for you as the leader to model short, concise prayers, and the group will follow your example. There may be one or two (or a few) who will not pay any attention to the suggested guidelines you share, and once they start praying, they may go on and on. Just be patient and bear with them. **Remember, the main point is that they are praying!**

“Make short prayers in meetings, and lengthy prayers when you talk and commune with God in

your closet.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 10, p. 130

“Learn to pray **short and right to the point**, asking for just what you need.” *Our High Calling*, p. 130

Be Sensitive as You Lead

Maintain sensitivity to the fact that some people are not very comfortable approaching God in prayer. They may never have experienced the power of hours spent in their own private prayer closet, and they certainly may not be accustomed to group prayer. A leader who offers long, perfectly developed prayers may intimidate some group members who feel they are not as eloquent. Pray as the Holy Spirit leads, but keep your words simple. Remember, Jesus is looking more for sincerity of heart than eloquence.

People may also be intimidated by the length of the prayer time. Those who are new to this united prayer model often worry that the time will drag; they cannot imagine praying for a whole hour. However, as we progress through the four themes, and as people are encouraged to keep individual prayers short and concise (rather than allowing the lengthy sermon-like prayers that go on and on), time usually goes quickly. In fact, most people will find that a whole hour of prayer can seem like just 20 minutes. The testimony of many is, “I’ve never prayed this long before, but the time went so quickly. This is powerful!”

Additional Inspiration and Resources

The Four Themes of Prayer

The Bible contains many examples of the four themes we emphasize in prayer. These examples can be found in both the Old and New Testaments and, most importantly, in Jesus' own example of prayer. These themes are deeply profound, yet they can also be understood by a child.

The Lord's Prayer: Matt. 6:9-13

“Our Father which art in heaven [**praise/worship**], hallowed be thy name [**praise**]. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven [**supplication for God's will**]. Give us this day our daily bread [**supplication for personal needs**]. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors [**confession and humility**]. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [**supplication for spiritual victory**]: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever [**praise/thanksgiving**].” (KJV)

“The Lord's Prayer was not intended to be repeated merely as a form, but it is an illustration of what our prayers should be—simple, earnest, and comprehensive. In a simple petition tell the Lord your needs and express gratitude for His mercies. Thus you invite Jesus as a welcome guest into your home and heart.” *Child Guidance*, p. 524

“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. You who complain that God does not hear your prayers, change your present order and mingle praise with your petitions. When you consider His goodness and mercies you will find that He will consider your wants.” *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317

More examples of these biblical prayer themes:

Nehemiah’s Prayer: Neh. 1:5-11

Children of Israel’s Prayer: Neh. 9

Solomon’s Prayer: 1 Kings 8

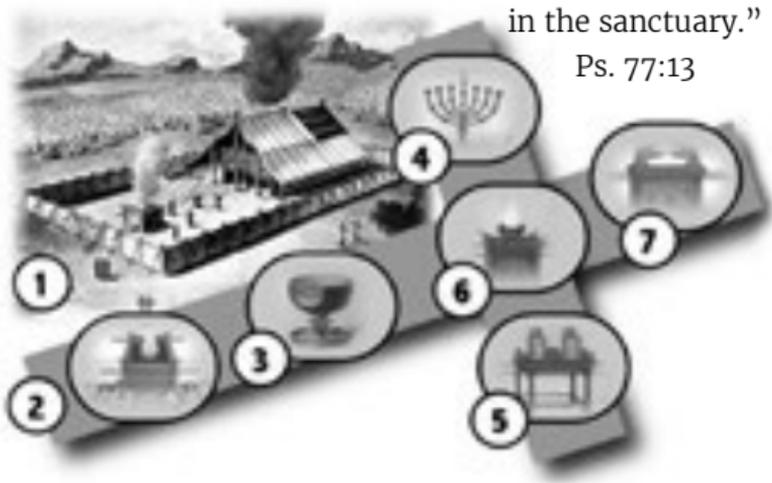
Daniel’s Prayer: Dan. 9:3-19

Before/After Pentecost: The Book of Acts

The Sanctuary Model

“Your way, O God, is
in the sanctuary.”

Ps. 77:13



1. **Thanksgiving:** We are instructed to “Enter

into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.” Ps. 100:4

2. **Confession:** The first stop inside the sanctuary is the altar of sacrifice. Here we confess our sins and confess our belief in Christ, claiming His sacrifice made at the cross. Confession is also a prerequisite for receiving the rain that we desire from heaven. 2 Chron. 6:26, 27; Lev. 4:26; Rom. 10:9-13.
3. **Confession and Cleansing:** Moving to the laver, we ask God to cleanse us (baptize us) through the power of His Word, and we accept the forgiveness He offers. Ex. 30:18-21; Eph. 5:26, 27.
4. **Supplication for Holy Spirit:** Then, entering the Holy Place, we come to the seven-branch candlestick. Here we ask God to baptize us and fill us with His Holy Spirit. Rev. 1:12; Luke 11:13.
5. **Supplication for Spiritual and Physical Bread:** At the table of showbread, we ask God to supply our needs. Most importantly, He is the spiritual bread of life. However, He also promises to provide for our physical bread and temporal needs. John 6:35; Isa. 33:16; Phil. 4:19.
6. **Supplication Through Our Intercessor:** At the altar of incense, Christ’s righteous prayers cover our own, making them acceptable to God. Then, covered by His righteousness,

we are able to intercede with Him for others. Rom. 8:26, 34; Isa. 59:16; Phil. 1:3-6.

7. **Thanksgiving in Worship and Praise:** Finally, as we bow in God's presence, reflecting on all that He has done for us, worship and praise again spring from our lips. Like the disciples after Pentecost, our greatest desire is to testify of what we have seen in Christ. Ps. 150:1, 2; Heb. 10:19-23.

What Will Be the Result of Such Prayers?

In the Old Testament, God dwelt in the physical sanctuary, or temple. We are God's temple (1 Cor. 3:16). When we confess our sins (1 John 1:9) and turn to Him in true praise, His Spirit will fill our lives. There will be no room for self or self-righteousness to stand any longer. His glory will fill this place!

“Indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord . . . that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.” 2 Chron. 5:13, 14

“The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified

by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God's right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. **He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness.** Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned." *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 344

"If we would offer up acceptable prayer, we should realize that in our petitioning we are in the audience chamber of the Most High. . . . It means much to pray to our Heavenly Father. We come to lay our imperfect tribute of thanksgiving at His feet in acknowledgment of His love and mercy, of which we are wholly undeserving. We come to make known our wants, to confess our sins, and to present to Him His own promises." *Review and Herald*, May 28, 1895, par. 2

"No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, **Lord, take my**

heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul. It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed. All our good works are dependent on a power outside of ourselves. Therefore there needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. Only by constant renunciation of self and dependence on Christ can we walk safely.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 159

Counterfeit Revival Culture

We do not promote or support any of the non-biblical prayer disciplines or methods of prayer rooted in the spiritual formation movement, mysticism, or the occult—such as contemplative prayer, centering prayer, repetitive prayers, prayer labyrinths, etc.

Mark Finley writes, in the book *Lord, Revive Us Again*, “Satan’s concern in the last days is not the unsaved world. He already has them in his grasp. His concern is Christians. By bringing deceptions into the church, he will mislead millions” (p. 75).

“Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. . . . The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he [Satan] will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God’s special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world. . . . There is an emotional excitement, a mingling of the true with the false, that is well adapted to mislead. **Yet none need be deceived.** In the light of God’s word it is not difficult to determine the nature of these movements. Wherever men neglect the testimony of the Bible, turning away from those plain, soul-testing truths which require self-denial and renunciation of the world, there we may be sure that God’s blessing is not bestowed. . . . ‘Ye shall know them by their fruits.’” *The Great Controversy*, p. 464

Genuine Revival Awareness

In our zeal to avoid the counterfeit spirit of revival, we need to be careful not to quench the true!

“There is at the present time almost a universal state of unbelief in regard to the operations of the Holy Spirit, especially in the manifestation of the gifts. Unbelief shuts the Spirit of God away from the mind. It quenches the Spirit, and leaves the masses exposed to the delusions of these last days. Again, those who by unbelief quench the spirit in these last days will be illy prepared to share in the great blessings which God promises by the prophet Joel, quoted by Peter (Acts 2:17, 18). ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy.’ The ‘Former Rain’ was given on the day of Pentecost, and enjoyed by the early Christians, to cause the Gospel seed to germinate and take root. The ‘Latter Rain’ is coming to ripen the golden harvest for the garner of God. Take care, dear reader, lest unbelief in you quench the Spirit, and shut you away from this great blessing designed for “them that believe.”
Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, p. 19

“The baptism of the Holy Ghost as on the day of Pentecost will lead to a revival of true religion and to the performance of many wonderful works. Heavenly intelligences will come among us, and men will speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Spirit of God. But should the Lord work upon

men as He did on and after the day of Pentecost, many who now claim to believe the truth would know so very little of the operation of the Holy Spirit that they would cry, 'Beware of fanaticism.' They would say of those who were filled with the Spirit, 'These men are full of new wine' (Acts 2:13). . . . **The great sin of those who profess to be Christians is that they do not open the heart to receive the Holy Spirit.** When souls long after Christ, and seek to become one with Him, then those who are content with the form of godliness exclaim, 'Be careful, do not go to extremes.' . . . But while we should be careful not to go into human excitement, we should not be among those who will raise inquiries and cherish doubts in reference to the work of the Spirit of God." *Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 322

"'Now, therefore,' says the Lord, 'Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.' So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm." Joel 2:12, 13

When we humble ourselves before God's throne, confess our sins, and intercede for others, our hearts will break, and there will sometimes be weeping! However, the real sign that God is bringing true revival to our midst will be the transformation that takes place in our lives.

“Obedience is the test of discipleship. It is the keeping of the commandments that proves the sincerity of our professions of love. When the doctrine we accept kills sin in the heart, purifies the soul from defilement, bears fruit unto holiness, we may know that it is the truth of God.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 146

The Test of the Scriptures

As the darkness of deception spreads across the Christian world, the only way to keep from being deceived is to test everything by the Word of God.

“‘To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.’ Isaiah 8:20. **The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness.** Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions. At every revival of God’s work the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. **So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures.** By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested. . . .

None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 593

“God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. . . . We are living in the most solemn period of this world’s history. The destiny of earth’s teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being and also the salvation of other souls depend upon the course which we now pursue. . . . We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgment. We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose.” *The Great Controversy*, pp. 595, 601

“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

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God’s promises,

as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. **Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it.** Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 621

Public Confession of Sin

The question often arises, “What is appropriate to be confessed publicly?” If the body of Christ is aware of the sin, or if the individual has been a stumbling block to others by his/her actions or attitude, then public confession is always appropriate. Otherwise, private confession is encouraged. Ellen White’s vision about the General Conference meetings of 1902 helps clarify this and offers beneficial lessons for us today. Remember, one of Satan’s biggest fears is that we will remove every roadblock between us and Christ. So let our prayer be “Nothing between my soul and the Savior, so that His blessed face may be seen; Nothing preventing the least of His favor: Keep the way clear! Let nothing between.”

“What Might Have Been” . . . Can Be!

“One day at noon I was writing of the work that might have been done at the last General

Conference if the men in positions of trust had followed the will and way of God. Those who have had great light have not walked in the light. The meeting was closed, and the break was not made. Men did not humble themselves before the Lord as they should have done, and the Holy Spirit was not imparted.

“I had written thus far when I lost consciousness, and I seemed to be witnessing a scene in Battle Creek. We were assembled in the auditorium of the Tabernacle. Prayer was offered, a hymn was sung, and prayer was again offered. Most earnest supplication was made to God. **The meeting was marked by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The work went deep, and some present were weeping aloud.**

“One arose from his bowed position and said that in the past he had not been in union with certain ones and had felt no love for them, but that now he saw himself as he was. With great solemnity he repeated the message to the Laodicean church: “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.” In my self-sufficiency this is just the way I felt,’ he said. “And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” I now see that this is my condition. My eyes are opened. My spirit has been hard and unjust. I thought myself righteous, but my heart is broken, and I see my need of the precious counsel of the One who has searched me through and through. Oh, how gracious and compassionate and loving are the words, “I counsel thee to buy of Me

gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Rev. 3:17, 18.

“The speaker turned to those who had been praying, and said: ‘We have something to do. We must confess our sins, and humble our hearts before God.’ He made heartbroken confessions and then stepped up to several of the brethren, one after another, and extended his hand, asking forgiveness. Those to whom he spoke sprang to their feet, making confession and asking forgiveness, and they fell upon one another’s necks, weeping. The spirit of confession spread through the entire congregation. It was a Pentecostal season. God’s praises were sung, and far into the night, until nearly morning, the work was carried on. . . .

“No one seemed to be too proud to make heartfelt confession, and those who led in this work were the ones who had influence, but had not before had courage to confess their sins. There was rejoicing such as never before had been heard in the Tabernacle.

“Then I aroused from my unconsciousness, and for a while could not think where I was. My pen was still in my hand. The words were spoken to me: ‘This might have been. All this the Lord was waiting to do for His people. All heaven was waiting to be gracious.’ . . . [Agony] of disappointment came over me as I realized that what I had witnessed was not a reality.” *Testimonies*

for the Church, vol. 8, pp. 104, 105, January 5, 1903,
to the Battle Creek Church

Let's look at some more principles to consider when regarding the topic of public and private confession: "The Scripture bids us, 'Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.' James 5:16. To the one asking for prayer, let thoughts like these be presented: 'We cannot read the heart, or know the secrets of your life. These are known only to yourself and to God. If you repent of your sins, it is your duty to make confession of them.' **Sin of a private character is to be confessed to Christ**, the only mediator between God and man. For 'if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' 1 John 2:1. Every sin is an offense against God and is to be confessed to Him through Christ. **Every open sin should be as openly confessed.** Wrong done to a fellow being should be made right with the one who has been offended. 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. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' 1 John 1:9." *Counsels for the Church*, p. 304

"All are fallible, all make mistakes and fall into

sin; but if the wrong-doer is willing to see his errors, as they are made plain by the convicting Spirit of God, and in humility of heart will confess them to God and to the brethren, then he may be restored; then the wound that sin has made will be healed. **If this course were pursued, there would be in the church much more child-like simplicity and brotherly love, heart beating in unison with heart.**" *Review and Herald*, Dec. 16, 1890, par. 2

"Fall on the Rock and be broken, and Christ will give you the true and heavenly dignity. **Let not pride, self-esteem, or self-righteousness keep anyone from confessing his sin**, that he may claim the promise. 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy' (Proverbs 28:13). Keep nothing back from God, and neglect not the confession of your faults to your brethren." *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 326

"The health of your soul, **the unity of your brethren, may depend upon the course you pursue** in these things. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. . . . Some see their faults, but thinking confession will detract from their dignity, they excuse their wrong, and shield themselves from the discipline that confession would give to the soul. . . . **[In] passing out of the path of confession, they fail to be faithful examples to the people.** They see the errors of others; but how can they have courage to give the advice, 'Confess your

faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed,' when they have failed to follow this instruction in their own lives? . . . [It] is not agreeable; because it does not flatter their pride, but reproveth and pains? Ministers and people, if saved at all, must be saved day by day, hour by hour. They must hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ, the illumination of the Holy Spirit." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 239

"True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be as publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty. . . . **Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away.** This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. The work that we have to do on our part is plainly set before us: 'Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.' Isaiah 1:16, 17." *Steps to Christ*, pp. 38, 39

Hindrances to Prayer

- We pray in unbelief. Jas. 1:6, 7; Mark 11:24
- We pray according to our own will. 1 John 5:14
- We seek the gift rather than the Giver. Jas. 2:23
- We pray prayers to feed our own lusts. Jas. 4:3
- We live in disobedience. Isa. 59:1, 2; Ps. 66:18
- We give up in prayer too easily. Luke 18:1-8
- We are judgmental toward others. Luke 6:37
- We are not able to forgive. Mark 11:26
- We have unresolved quarrels. Matt. 5:23, 24
- We turn a deaf ear to those in need. Prov. 21:13
- We lack honor in our family. 1 Pet. 3:7
- We have not learned to abide in Christ. John 15:7

“When we do not receive the very things we asked 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 shortsighted 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. But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire, is presumption. 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.” *Prayer*, p. 102

“As activity increases and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God, and seeking to make a savior of our activity. We need to look constantly to Jesus, realizing that it is His power which does the work. While we are to labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost, we must also take time for meditation, for prayer, and for the study of the Word of God. 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

The Need to Persevere

“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

“There must be earnest prayer. Weaken the hands of the enemy by **wrestling with God** in prayer.” *Pacific Union Recorder*, June 5, 1902

“Great importance is attached to the united prayer,

the union of purpose. God hears the prayers of individuals, but on this occasion [referring to Matt. 18:19] 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

"The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. . . . Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence?" *Steps to Christ*, p. 94

"Could we see all the activity of human instrumentality, as it appears before God, we would see that **only the work accomplished by much prayer, which is sanctified by the merit of Christ, will stand the test of the judgment.**" *Christian Service*, p. 263

"**Prayer and faith are closely allied, and they need to be studied together.** In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that everyone who would make his lifework a success must understand. Christ says, 'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.' Mark 11:24. He makes it

plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and **whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.**" *Prayer*, p. 105

"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 Great Controversy*, p. 622

"It is a 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

"From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld. He has unrestricted access to Him in whom all fullness dwells." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 300

"Day after day is passing into eternity, bringing us nearer to the close of probation. **As never before we must pray for the Holy Spirit to be more abundantly bestowed upon us.**" *Gospel Workers*, p. 288

"While their united prayers were ascending in faith to Heaven, the answer came. The place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were endowed anew with the Holy Spirit." *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 67

As we persevere in prayer, in brokenness and humility, God will hear and He will answer—above and beyond what we expect—for **“the honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His Word unto us”** (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 148). So let’s keep daring to ask for more, and keep moving forward, as we stay rooted in God’s Word.

Forward on our knees—praying for rain!

Thoughts From Church Leaders

“United prayer has made a significant impact in our personal lives and around the world. Revival is taking place and churches are coming to life. Here at the General Conference, we are so thankful for the many small groups that have covered our meetings in prayer and also for the hundreds of thousands who have participated in Ten Days of Prayer, 100 Days of Prayer, the 777 prayer initiative, Day of Prayer and Fasting, and other worldwide calls for united prayer. These prayers do make a difference. We see God’s power being unleashed, and the Holy Spirit is moving powerfully on hearts, just as God promised would happen before the Second Coming. Let us continue to pray and press together! Only in eternity will we see what God has been able to do in answer to these many united prayers.”

Jerry and Janet Page

Ministerial Association

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

“Already more than half a million copies of this booklet have been printed and shared. We praise the Lord for the difference united prayer is making in the world church. May each of us experience the transforming power of prayer as we open our hearts to the Almighty early each morning (Ps. 5:3) and rest with confidence in His plans and His will for our lives, because He is attentive to our prayers (1 Pet. 3:12). Let’s move forward on our knees!”

Dr. Guillermo Biaggi

General Vice President

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Prayer and Revival Resources

Books

True Revival – Ellen G. White
The Acts of the Apostles – Ellen G. White
Lord, Revive Us Again – Mark Finley
10 Days in the Upper Room – Mark Finley
If My People Pray – Randy Maxwell
40 Days of Prayer – Dennis Smith
Daring to Ask for More – Melody Mason

Websites

Ten Days of Prayer
www.tendaysofprayer.org

Revival & Reformation
www.revivalandreformation.org

The Revival and Reformation website, listed above, contains hundreds of prayer resources, prayer programs for days of prayer and fasting, Bible promises to claim in prayer, as well as inspirational revival materials and messages that can be used to encourage your church or prayer group.

If you have a testimony to share, please visit:

<https://www.revivalandreformation.org/uiip/submit-story>

Find electronic versions of this book at:

<http://www.revivalandreformation.org/prayer>

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“Freely you have received, freely give.” Matt. 10:8