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The Prayer of the Servant

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One day in college in Bucharest, Romania, the dean came to me and said, “You are missing school every Saturday. We know you are an Adventist, but in this country there is no God. The next Saturday that you miss school will be your last day in college. You will be expelled.” I prayed for two days and nights asking God to save my education—but with no answer. Then I asked my dad for direction. He answered, “You said you want to serve God, didn’t you? If that’s still true, then you need to change your prayer style. There are many things that God’s servants should do, but I recommend you start with three vital points:

1. “Sacrifice your will to God’s will. Your prayer should mirror that of Jesus: ‘nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done’ (Luke 22:42). Don’t pray only routine or crisis prayers; make prayer a lifestyle, make it the breathing of your soul. If you love God more than anything else, then He comes before a job, before a house, before education— even before family. ‘ If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple ’ (Luke 14:26).

2. “Seek first God’s honor and His plans. Before you ask God for help, look for the things that would benefit His kingdom and plans. Worry for His work, and let Him worry for your work. ‘Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you’ (Matt. 6:33). Make sure that in all your prayers you put God, His kingdom, and His plans before your plans, and then learn to trust and wait on Him for all your needs. Pray that God will do whatever is best for His honor.

3. “Serve the people around you. Love the people at school more than your education. You need to love them as much as you love yourself, so you need to pray for them as much as you pray for yourself. They don’t know God. They are communist. But you are not there by chance. Remember, nothing happens by chance. God put you there for a time like this. You are there that they may know God through you. Do not misrepresent God by living a self-centered life. Therefore, pray that God will do with you whatever will help those people learn about God.”

This was tough counsel, but that night I prayed and told the Lord I was prepared to follow the advice I received from my father. Instantly I had peace. I didn’t know how God would answer, or whether I would be expelled from school, but I knew that God heard my prayer. The next day was a Friday; it was to be my last day of school. As I approached, the school secretary asked me whether I was friends with the country president, Nicolae Ceaușescu. I thought she was joking. She asked whether I had any friends, relatives, or connections in the government. My answer

was a simple “No.” She then told me that early in the morning, the president had given an order. Starting that Saturday, to save energy and help the economy, all schools in the country were to be closed every Saturday.

I called my dad and told him the great news. He said, “If you want to serve God, remember, don’t ever try to have Him serve you. Jesus came to serve; do the same. Honor Him, and He will honor you.” I understood from that day that leaders are called to sacrificial service.

Pavel Goia is editor of *Ministry: International Journal for Pastors*. This story is reprinted from the November 2017 issue of *Ministry*.

World Church Prayer Requests for Dec. 10-17, 2017

- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please continue to pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured out in a powerful way in the first quarter Day of Prayer and Fasting, which will occur this coming January 6, 2018. The emphasis for this coming quarter is: “Interceding for Our Families.” This is a perfect opportunity to pray for family members who need a closer walk with God, or for familial healing to take place. To learn more, visit: www.revivalandreformation.org.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for the General Conference staff and especially their families. These family members make many sacrifices to support the ministry of the church and this can take its toll. Many GC staff are traveling to be with family over the holidays. Please pray that God will bless our staff with meaningful quality time with their family members, and that family bonds will grow stronger in the Lord.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for God’s Spirit to be poured out on members in the Euro-Asia Division as they seek to share their faith. Mikhail Kaminsky, president of the Euro-Asia Division, shares that despite having a lot of tools for reaching cities, the work in the region of the former Soviet Union remains extremely challenging. We need the Holy Spirit to work miracles.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for *Pathways to Health* and the *Generation of Youth for Christ* convention that will be taking place in Phoenix the last week of December. Please pray that those who come to the health clinic will see Jesus in the young people and medical personnel who serve them. Also, GYC is currently in 40 days of prayer leading up to the conference. Please pray that God’s spirit will be poured out in a powerful way on the meetings, as thousands will be attending from all over the world.