
Back to the Altar — Our Most Urgent Need

DAY 7 — A CHURCH THAT WORSHIPS

“Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker” (Psalm 95:6).

(Un)regular Worship

A 2018 worldwide survey of Seventh-day Adventists found that only 34 percent of Adventist homes are engaging in regular morning and evening worship, and only 52 percent of church members have any personal devotions at all. Can a church with an end-time message centered on worship—the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12—deliver this solemn message if its members are not faithfully engaged in personal and family worship? In other words, can we proclaim effectively what many of us are not doing daily?

Ellen White comments, “There is nothing more needed in the work [of God] than the practical results of communion with God” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 47). Elsewhere she writes, “Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to the Lord wherever they pitch their tent. . . . Fathers and mothers should often lift up their hearts to God in humble supplication for themselves and their children. Let the father, as priest of the household, lay upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household Jesus will love to tarry” (*Child Guidance*, pp. 518, 519)

Our Most Urgent Need

The restoration of personal and family worship among Seventh-day Adventists is perhaps the most pressing need of our time. But it will not be easy. Today we face the challenge of technology that increasingly occupies our time and alters our minds. Our addiction to media, especially social media, has left us anxious, irritable, lonely, stressed, depressed, sleepless, and unhappy with our station in life.

Ironically, personal and family worship have the opposite effect. Worship calms our minds, decreases loneliness, reduces stress, increases peace, fulfills our emotional needs, and teaches us contentment. Might the altar be the antidote to our frazzled minds and restless hearts?

Now more than ever, God is calling us back to His heart, to consistent times of refreshing in His presence. It is for this reason that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has launched the “Back the Altar” initiative, a landmark effort to rebuild the broken personal and family altars in God’s church. By 2027 we hope to see at least 70 percent of Adventist members engaged morning and evening in personal and family worship. You will hear more about this initiative in the days ahead, but we can all begin now to worship God faithfully and consistently. If we go back to the altar with God, we will be transformed into His image and empowered to finish His work!

Today let us ask God for a special outpouring of His Holy Spirit on our worship experiences with Him. Now more than ever, we need the precious blessing of communion with God.

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)**Praying God's Word — Psalm 95:6**

"Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

"Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down"

God, how often we have failed to realize how truly great and awesome and beyond human comprehension You are. The vastness of the universe cannot contain You, and yet we too often do not honor or worship You accordingly and with deep reverence. Give us a glimpse of Your glory and help us realize how You deserve all honor, glory, and adoration. Remind us to approach You with reverence and respect, acknowledging You as our mighty God. Amen.

"Let Us Kneel Before the Lord our Maker"

Creator God, You are the ultimate Master Artist. All things You have made are beautiful and perfect. Your love is written on every opening bud and every leaf. You are also our true Father, the One who made us, desired us, and created us in Your image. How can we ever fully realize the honor You have bestowed upon us to be called Your children? We praise You and worship You, our Maker! Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: I Need Thee Every Hour (#483); Be Thou My Vision (#547); Spirit of the Living God (#672)

Other Songs: Unto Thee, O Lord; Surely the Presence of the Lord