

## Leader's Guide

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2024! We believe prayer is the birthplace of revival. God has worked so many miracles in past years as we have sought Him together in prayer and fasting. The Holy Spirit has brought about conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, revived churches, and healed relationships.

Has God's voice been calling you to revival? The Bible is full of promises for you:

"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 Chronicles 7:14).

"And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

"And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Joel 2:32).

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8).

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

Wherever you are in life right now, God is closer than you think. He wants to pour out His blessings on your family, your church, your community, and your world.

## General Items for Ten Days of Prayer

### Daily Prayer Guides

We have provided a prayer guide for each of the ten days. Each guide includes a Bible passage, devotional reading, Bible texts to pray through, prayer suggestions, and song suggestions. We recommend that you copy the daily guides so each participant can have one to follow during the prayer time.

Churches around the world will unite in praying about each day's topic. Join them in praying through the verses and prayer requests, but don't feel that you must rush through the entire list of prayer suggestions. You may want to divide into small groups and have each group pray for a portion of your prayer requests.

We also included a document called World Church Prayer Requests. It's important to pray together for our world church family, but you may want to spend extra time praying for local needs if your group includes visitors from the community. Pray about how you can best welcome guests and make them feel a part of your group.

### Suggested Times for Each Prayer Session

Keep your prayer time simple so the group can focus on actually praying. How much time you spend on each section will vary. The following guide is just a suggestion:

**Welcome and introduction:** 2 – 5 minutes

**Read devotional (in daily prayer guide):** 5 minutes

**Pray through the verses in "Praying God's Word" (in daily prayer guide):** 10 – 15 minutes

**Pray about the items in "More Prayer Suggestions" (in daily prayer guide):** 20 – 30 minutes

**Respond in song and praise:** 5 – 10 minutes

### Pray for Others

Encourage each person to pray consistently for five to seven people that God has placed in their life. They can be relatives, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or simply acquaintances. Encourage them to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in choosing these names and in reaching out to these people during the ten days. You may want to provide some cards or pieces of paper on which people can record the names they will be praying for.

**Sabbath Services During Ten Days of Prayer**

Have a special prayer focus and share testimonies of answered prayer during the church services on both Sabbaths. Be creative—there are many ways to share with the church family what is happening during the daily prayer meetings.

**Final Sabbath Celebration**

The final Sabbath should be designed as a time of great rejoicing in all that God has done throughout the ten days. Include ample time for testimonies of answered prayer, biblical teaching/preaching on prayer, and singing. Lead the congregation in a time of prayer so that those who have not attended the daily meetings can experience the joy of praying with others. Please see the Sabbath Celebration handout for more ideas.

**Follow-up to Ten Days of Prayer**

Pray about how God wants your church/group to continue what He has begun during Ten Days of Prayer. Perhaps you will continue with a weekly prayer session. Or perhaps God wants you to begin a new ministry in your church or an outreach to the community. Be open and follow where God leads. You're sure to be amazed as you walk with Him. The document called Outreach Challenge is filled with ideas for service.

**Testimonies**

Please share stories of how God has worked through Ten Days of Prayer! Your stories will be an encouragement to many others. Testimonies may be submitted online at [www.tendaysofprayer.org](http://www.tendaysofprayer.org).

## United Prayer Pointers

**Agree Together**

When someone prays a request to God, be sure some others pray for that same request and agree together—this is powerful! Don't think that because one person has prayed about the request, no one else needs to. "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 18:19). How encouraging it is to be lifted up in prayer!

**Claiming God's Promises**

Encourage the group to claim God's promises as they pray. It is so easy to focus on our problems. But when we claim God's promises, we increase our faith and remind ourselves that nothing is impossible with God. The promises help us take our eyes off our weaknesses and difficulties and set them on Jesus. For every weakness and every struggle, we can find Bible promises to claim. Encourage people to search for more promises and write them down so they can claim them in the future.

**Fasting**

Invite those joining you in Ten Days of Prayer to consider some type of fasting, such as fasting from TV, secular music, movies, the Internet, sweets, or other types of food that are hard to digest. Use the extra time to pray and study the Bible, asking God to help you and your congregation to abide more fully in Christ. By adopting a simple diet, we allow our minds to become more receptive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

**Holy Spirit**

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you what to 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, emphasis supplied).

**Journaling**

Keeping a prayer journal during the Ten Days of Prayer can help participants to internalize the daily prayer theme, make concrete commitments to God, and recognize His blessings. Writing out our prayers and keeping a record of God's answers is a proven path to encouragement.

If you wish, you might provide time during the prayer meeting for people to journal their responses to God in private prayer journals. Or you could keep a group journal of prayer requests and answers—either in a notebook, on a large poster, or online. It is exciting and faith-building to look back and see how God has answered prayers!

**Reverence**

Encourage and model a reverent attitude. We are approaching the throne room of the King of the universe. Let's not treat this prayer time carelessly in our posture or mannerisms. However, it is not necessary that everyone kneel continuously. You want people to be comfortable for an hour, so encourage everyone to kneel or sit or stand as God leads and as they are comfortable.

**Sentence Prayers**

Prayers should be short and to the point. This gives others an opportunity to pray as well. Try to limit your prayers to a few sentences. Each person can pray multiple times. Short sentence prayers keep the prayer time interesting and allow the Holy Spirit to impress the group how to pray. You don't need to open and close each short sentence prayer with phrases such as "Dear God" and "Amen." It is an ongoing conversation with God.

**Silence**

As a leader, don't dominate the prayer time. The goal is to get others praying. Times of silence are wonderful, as they give God time to speak to our hearts. Allow the Holy Spirit to work and give everyone time to pray.

**Singing**

Spontaneous group songs, mingled between prayers, add beauty to the prayer meeting. Suggested songs are listed at the end of each theme sheet. Do not feel that you need to use all the songs—these are simply suggestions. Singing is also a good way to transition from one prayer section to another.

**Taking Prayer Requests**

Don't ask for prayer requests from the group. Instead, tell people to pray their requests and encourage others to join in agreement and prayer for those requests. Here's why: time! Talking about the requests will take up most of your prayer time. Satan is thrilled if he can keep us talking about the problem instead of praying about the problem. Group members will often begin counseling and suggesting solutions. The power is from God! The more we pray, the more His power is unleashed.

**Your Daily Time**

This is so important! Make sure that you as a leader are spending time daily at the feet of Jesus, talking with Him and reading His Word. If you will make knowing God a first priority in your life, it will open such a beautiful experience to you. "From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 210). When a leader prays, God works on hearts!

## Introduction

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2024! We believe prayer is the birthplace of revival. God has worked so many miracles in past years as we have sought Him together in prayer and fasting. The Holy Spirit has brought about conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, revived churches, and healed relationships. Here are just a few testimonies from the previous year:

*"I have never felt the Spirit of God in this way before."* **(Frank B.)**

*"God saved my family through the 10 Days of Prayer."* **(Adebayo O.)**

*"During the Ten Days of Prayer, I prayed for my non-believing family. On day 9, my 20-year-old granddaughter came over, and for the first time in her life, she started asking me spiritual questions. This was quite the answer to my prayer!"* **(Fran J.)**

*"We prayed for my father, who had left the faith and us as a family, to find salvation. By the end of the ten days, he, for the first time in years, came home and asked for forgiveness, seeking reconciliation and wanting to make things right with God."* **(G.M.)**

Has God's voice been calling you to revival? The Bible is full of promises for you:

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- "And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).
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- "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8).
- "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

Wherever you are in life right now, God is closer than you think. He wants to pour out His blessings on your family, your church, your community, and your world!

## Our Prayer Theme: Priorities of Faith – Christian Virtues in Turbulent Times

Do you ever find yourself caught up in the busyness of life, leaving little room for spiritual moments? If you yearn for a more meaningful and fulfilling spiritual life, these 10 Days of Prayer and reflection will be precious to you.

During these ten days, you'll have a unique opportunity to release the things that occupy your mind and life but don't bring true satisfaction. Instead, we will focus on what truly matters to God. It is a chance to intentionally live with less, allowing you to experience more of what really counts.

Throughout this journey, you will come across practical insights to deepen your trust in God, enrich your Sabbath experience, and strengthen your daily connection with Him. Meaningful prayer, acts of kindness, and cultivating gratitude will also be part of our exploration. Moreover, you will gain the determination, passion, and perseverance needed to succeed.

Let's open our hearts and minds to God, inviting His Holy Spirit to enter our lives during these ten days. Through this process, we pray to be transformed and renewed, becoming powerful witnesses of God's life-changing love.

Let's pray together for a revival of our personal and family worship altars, that the Holy Spirit might reform and empower us to proclaim God's final message of hope to the world!

- Dr. Frank Hasel (author of this year's materials)

### **Suggested Guidelines for 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.
- Do not be afraid of silence, 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**

It is our privilege to claim God's promises 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.

It is so easy to focus on our needs, our difficulties, our challenges—and to wail and whine about our situation when we pray. 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. Take your eyes off yourself and your weaknesses and look to Jesus. By beholding Him, we become changed into His image.

Ellen White offers this encouragement: "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).

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.

### **Fasting**

We encourage you to do a Daniel Fast during these ten days. Starting the year with prayer and fasting is a wonderful 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 ten days. We likewise encourage you to adopt a very simple diet during these ten days. 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.

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 can take so much of our time. Put aside everything possible so you can have more time to spend with the Lord.

Fasting is not a quick way to obtain a miracle from God. Fasting is all about humbling ourselves so God can work in us and through us. 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 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 who intercedes 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 read 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 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 Others**

During these ten days we encourage you to pray consistently for the people God has placed in your life. Choose five to seven people—they can be relatives, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or simply acquaintances. Take some time to ask God whom He would like you to pray for. Ask Him also to give you a real burden for these people. Write the names on a piece of paper and keep it in a prominent place, such as in your Bible. You'll be amazed at how God works in response to your prayers!

### **Ten Days of Prayer Outreach Challenge**

Jesus calls us not only to pray but also to serve the practical needs of those around us. "For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me" (Matthew 25:35, 36).

In *The Ministry of Healing* we read, "We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work" (p. 512). We have received so much love from our Savior, and we have the privilege of sharing that love with friends, neighbors, and strangers in need.

Ask God how you and your church can serve others after Ten Days of Prayer. As you work to organize service activities, avoid letting the arrangements distract you from praying. "Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people" (*Prayer*, p. 313).

In the online Ten Days of Prayer resources, you'll find a document with dozens of outreach ideas. Jesus invites you to be His hands and feet to a world in need!

## About the Author

Frank M. Hasel, Ph.D., is a theologian and author who serves as an Associate Director of the Biblical Research Institute (BRI) at the World Headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Silver Spring, MD. In his new book, *Love Is! A Journey of Grief, Grace, and Gratitude* (Cascade, 2024), he candidly shares his personal experience of losing his beloved wife to cancer, offering valuable insights into the nature of grief and what it means to go through a significant loss in life.

A native of Germany, he served as an ordained pastor, Bible teacher, and dean of theology in Europe before moving to the United States. Frank finds joy in his relationship with Jesus, relishes stimulating conversations, appreciates genuine kindness, finds solace in nature walks, and enjoys occasional dairy-free ice cream treats.

Frank firmly believes that the teachings of the Bible hold the key to human flourishing, enriching every aspect of life. To stay connected with him, you can follow his journey on Instagram ([@frank.m.hasel](https://www.instagram.com/frank.m.hasel)) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Frank.M.Hasel>), or visit his website [www.frankmhasel.com](http://www.frankmhasel.com)

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## Night of Prayer

Consider holding an all-night prayer service as part of Ten Days of Prayer. For example, you could begin at 6:00 p.m. and finish at 6:00 a.m. Choose a schedule that's suitable for your group.

### **Why a Night of Prayer?**

There is nothing "holy" in staying awake and praying all night. However, night might be the only time when people are not busy or in a rush. We believe that your purpose should not be to stay up the whole night but to pray as long as necessary and until you have prayed for everything you feel God wants you to pray for.

We suggest that several people lead out during the night. Be sure to have some breaks. As a leader, you can sense the atmosphere and know when a break is needed and when you need to move on to the next section of prayer. You can also incorporate the reading of Bible passages into your prayer time. You may want to do all of the suggested items or only some of them, depending on what is best for your group. Feel free to change the order.

### **Possible Format for Night of Prayer**

**Start with a session of praise.** Praise God in your prayers and also through songs.

**Take some time for confession,** making sure that nothing is hindering God from hearing you. Give people time for private confession and have a time of corporate confession. Encourage the people to confess private sins privately and to confess publicly only the public sins. In Daniel 9:1-19 we read about Daniel, who interceded and publicly confessed the sins of God's people.

**Pray for the needs of people who are at the prayer meeting.** So many people are hurting or in need of prayer, or know someone else who is in desperate need of prayer. Make a circle, put a chair in the middle, and invite those who have a special prayer request to come one by one and share their requests. Then gather around the person and have two or three people pray for the person's specific need and claim God's promises.

**Divide the group in two.** Have the females pray in one room (with a female leader) and the males in another room (with a male leader). Many personal needs cannot and should not be shared with everyone. It is easier to share with those of the same gender.

After you come back together, **pray for needs in your community and church.** Also take time for **world church prayer requests** (listed in a separate document in the Ten Days of Prayer materials). Don't feel that you must rush through the entire list. You may want to divide into small groups and have each group pray for part of the list.

**Pray for the list of five to seven people** you have been praying for during these ten days.

**Choose a Bible passage and pray through it.**

**Close the prayer time with another session of praise and thanksgiving.**

## Outreach Challenge for Ten Days of Prayer

Jesus calls us not only to pray but also to serve the spiritual and physical needs of those around us. "For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me" (Matthew 25:35, 36).

In *The Ministry of Healing* we read, "We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work" (p. 512). We have received so much love from our Savior, and we have the privilege of sharing that love with friends, neighbors, and strangers in need.

Ask God how you and your church can serve others after the Ten Days of Prayer. As you work to organize the service activities, avoid letting the arrangements distract you from praying. "Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people" (*Prayer*, p. 313).

Here are some ways of helping others. Choose whatever fits the needs of your community, and feel free to add your own ideas.

- Cook a meal for someone who has been sick.
- Invite a neighbor/co-worker to a social gathering.
- Give food to a homeless person.
- Donate clothing that you would want donated to you.
- "Adopt" an elderly person. Visit the person on a regular basis and help with chores, shopping, cooking, or garden work.
- Bake some bread and share a loaf with a neighbor.
- Help with neighborhood projects.
- Offer to stay with a sick or disabled person so their caretakers can run an errand.
- Participate in neighborhood projects.
- Introduce yourself to a new neighbor by taking them a meal. Make them feel welcome in the neighborhood.
- Buy groceries and deliver them to a needy family.
- Donate your old eyeglasses.
- Offer to give a Bible study.
- Visit people in nursing homes.
- Give some "food" money to a student.
- Collect clothing for the needy. You might start a clothes closet at your church for sharing with others.
- Donate your old laptop or other electronics.
- Donate a used car.
- Organize a "Health Expo."
- Send a card to a shut-in.
- Organize an evangelistic series.
- Call your neighbors and ask how they're doing.
- Give someone a book you think they'd like.
- Pass out GLOW tracts (available to order here: <http://www.glowonline.org/>).
- Invite someone to accept Jesus.
- Hold a cooking school.
- Give away sharing books about biblical topics.
- Take some food to someone who has lost a loved one.
- Visit someone in the hospital to encourage them or help them in some way.
- Read to an elderly person.

- Visit a children's home and offer your help to the staff.
- Start a sewing/knitting/crocheting group to make clothes to give away.
- Read the Bible aloud for someone who can't see or read.
- Host a youth night at your home.
- Volunteer at a shelter for abused persons.
- Donate some books to a children's home or shelter.
- Take children from your church to visit a home for elderly people. Present a program for them.
- Plan and host a fun day for special-needs kids and their families.
- Have a community clean-up day.
- Start a healthy living club in your church. Invite friends and neighbors.
- Ask someone if they would like to join you in watching a DVD with a spiritual message. As you watch together, pray that the Holy Spirit will speak to the person's heart.
- Design your own project.

For more resources on witnessing, visit [www.revivalandreformation.org/resources/witnessing](http://www.revivalandreformation.org/resources/witnessing).

## Bible Promises to Claim in Prayer

*All Scriptures taken from NKJV*

### **Promises for the Holy Spirit**

"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

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" Luke 11:13

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. . . . And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 14:26; 16:8

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." John 14:12-14

"So he answered and said to me: This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts." Zech. 4:6

### **Promises that God Answers Prayers**

"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

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16

"Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." Mark 11:24

"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me." Ps. 50:15

"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

"And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Matt. 21:22

"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." John 14:13, 14

"And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." John 16:23, 24

"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 asked of Him." 1 John 5:14, 15

### **Promises About God's Power**

"Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." Gen. 18:14

"The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." Ex. 14:14

"But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.'" Mark 10:27

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

"I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You." Job 42:2

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:31, 32

"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Num. 23:19

"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Isa. 40:28-31

### **Promises for God's Guidance**

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Josh. 1:9

"Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." Gen. 28:15

"Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared." Ex. 23:20

"But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul." Deut. 4:29

"Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." Jer. 33:3

"Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." Isa. 40:4, 5

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye." Ps. 32:8

"And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed." Deut. 31:8

"Who is the man that fears the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses." Ps. 25:12

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." Prov. 3:5, 6

"If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail." Isa. 58:10, 11

"It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear." Isa. 65:24

**Promises for a Changed Heart**

"Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart." Jer. 24:7

"And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live." Deut. 30:6

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." Ezek. 36:26

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." 2 Cor. 5:17

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20

"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." 1 Thess. 5:23, 24

**Promises for Forgiveness**

"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 Chr. 7:14

"For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You." Ps. 86:5

"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses." Mark 11:25

"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." Eph. 4:32

"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

"Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18

"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins." Isa. 43:25

"For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." Jer. 31:34

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. 1:7

**Promises for Victory Over Sin**

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." 1 John 5:4

"Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." Rom. 8:37

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:57

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." Isa. 41:10

"Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."  
Eph. 6:16

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20

"For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13

"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Gal. 5:16

"And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen." Rom. 16:20

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Rom. 12:2

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15

### **Promises for Healing**

"If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you." Ex. 15:26

"Your sandals shall be iron and bronze; as your days, so shall your strength be." Deut. 33:25

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." Ps. 103:2-5

"Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones." Prov. 3:7, 8

"He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:3-5

"Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for You are my praise." Jer. 17:14

"For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds,' says the Lord, 'because they called you an outcast saying: This is Zion; no one seeks her.'" Jer. 30:17

"Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth." Jer. 33:6

"But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves." Mal. 4:2

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." James 5:14, 15

**Promises for Strength to Do God's Will**

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:16-18

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Gal. 6:9

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Phil. 4:13

"For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13

"And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. 12:9

**Promises About Being God's Witnesses**

"Do not fear, nor be afraid; have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one." Isa. 44:8

"Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you." Isa. 60:1

"Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation." 2 Cor. 5:18

"But the Lord said to me: Do not say, 'I am a youth,' for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak." Jer. 1:7

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter 2:9

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15



## Sabbath Celebration

Design the final Sabbath of Ten Days of Prayer to celebrate God's goodness and mighty power. Share how you have experienced the power of prayer and the valuable spiritual insights you have gained throughout the last ten days. Rejoice in what God has done, is doing, and will do.

The needs of each congregation are unique, so please work with local leaders to develop a specific plan for your church. Here are some possible items to include in your final Sabbath church service.

### **Theme:**

Priorities of Faith: Christian Virtues in Turbulent Times

### **Theme Verse:**

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8, ESV)

### **Possible Songs:**

Micah 6:8 Scripture Song

Change My Heart, O God

Be Thou My Vision (#547)

Fill My Cup, Lord (#493)

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (#469)

I Surrender All (#309)

### **Sermon Ideas:**

Have a pastor, elder, or prayer leader preach a short sermon about some of the Christian virtues highlighted in the 2024 Ten Days of Prayer materials.

### **[OR]**

Have the Ten Days of Prayer participants take turns offering short summaries (1-2 minutes) for each of the 10 daily prayer guides. Share the title, the main verse, and a key thought. (Plan ahead so the summaries stay within 1-2 minutes. For most people, one minute is 125-150 spoken words.)

### **[OR]**

Enlist three members of different age groups to give short presentations (5-10 minutes) on how they live an intentional and meaningful Christian life every day.

Conclude with an appeal for listeners to make their Christian walk more Christ-centered, biblical, and meaningful based on the virtues and values in the Ten Days of Prayer readings.

### **Other Program Ideas:**

Member testimonies of answered prayer, small-group prayer time, announcement of future prayer or service activities, children's story, special music selections, etc.

## World Church Prayer Requests

- Lord, please let a mighty revival of primitive godliness sweep Your church in the final days. May we stand for truth though the heavens fall. Let this revival start with me.
- Lord, show us how to be consistent in daily worship, individually and as a family.
- Lord, open our eyes to the distractions in our lives. The things that keep us from being able to focus entirely on You. Give us undivided hearts of worship.
- Lord, help us to allow You to wake us up each morning, no matter how early, so that we can have sweet, unrushed time in Your Word and prayer.
- We pray that You would help us to come to You as we are, with all our feelings, our imperfections, our sins, and our needs, and allow You to love us, change us, and remake us into the person You long for us to be.
- Lord, teach us how to plead for a daily baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- We pray for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit to empower our witness and enable us to engage in the work You have given us to do before Your return.
- Show us how to love our families sacrificially and how to make disciples for the Kingdom, starting with our own children and loved ones.
- We pray for wisdom to search, understand, and follow God's Word. Teach us to rightly divide the words of truth and faithfully share them with others.
- Lord, please renew our appreciation for the instructions found in the inspired writings of Ellen White.
- We pray for religious liberty and freedom of conscience throughout the world. Lord, please open doors for the proclamation of Your Word in closed territories.
- Lord, may Your world church accept the call to widely proclaim the Three Angels' messages to every nation and tongue. Show us how to center all these teachings on the love and righteousness of Christ.
- Lord, help us model to our youth and young people what living the Three Angels' messages looks like.
- Lord, may Adventists worldwide declare "I Will Go" and take up the call to serve You and proclaim the good news of salvation.
- We pray for medical professionals, scientists, government leaders, and public health officials to have wisdom for the many decisions they make.
- We pray that Adventists around the world will offer practical aid and encouragement to those who are suffering. Give us courage, creativity, and an unselfish spirit when our neighbors need us most.
- We pray for those financially affected by job losses due to the changing economy.
- Lord, please show church members how to help those struggling with mental health issues or isolation.
- We pray for pastors and churches to find ways of keeping church members actively praying together. Lord, please draw Your church together in worship and service.
- We pray for a spiritual revival among Seventh-day Adventist young people attending colleges and universities worldwide. May they become vibrant ambassadors for Christ.
- We pray for the 69 percent of the earth's population who have not received an unclouded presentation of Jesus.
- We pray for the 62 million people in the 28 least-reached cities of the former Soviet Union (Euro-Asia Division).
- We pray for God to raise up brave missionaries willing to work among the 746 people groups in the 20 countries of the Middle East.
- Lord, please raise up modern-day Waldensian-type students willing to serve You in difficult places.
- We pray for Adventist members facing persecution or imprisonment because of their beliefs.
- We pray for the 202 million people in the 41 least-reached cities of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division to know Jesus.
- We pray for the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department of each local church as they seek God's plan and reach out to their communities with loving service, Bible study, and personal witnessing.
- We pray for Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) as they meet practical needs worldwide.

- We pray for the 16 million people in the 6 least-reached cities of the South Pacific Division.
- We pray for the Holy Spirit to help us know how to reach the 406 million people in the 105 least-reached cities of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division.
- Lord, please bless as Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries mobilizes chaplains and interested members to minister to those in prison.
- Lord, we pray for our Sabbath School teachers. Please let them know how important their work is for our children.
- Lord, we seek your guidance for the many Centers of Influence, health and family programs, and Pathfinder clubs worldwide.
- Lord, please show us how to send more truth-filled literature (printed and electronic) into our communities. We pray that people will read it and that the Holy Spirit will convict them of Bible truth.
- Lord, we ask for Your protection over missionaries working in dangerous places.
- Please raise up literature evangelists, student volunteers, authors, media specialists, and financial supporters to spread words of hope and life.
- We pray for Adventist schools, students, and teachers worldwide. May these schools faithfully teach Bible truth and lead young people into mission, service, and a saving relationship with Christ.
- Lord, give us wisdom to reach secular cultures without interest in religion. Let Your Holy Spirit break down the walls that surround secular hearts.
- Bless us as we reach out to people enslaved by spirit worship, idolatry, and animistic beliefs. Help us to understand their worldview and introduce them to a personal Saviour.
- Lord, please inspire Seventh-day Adventists worldwide to pray as never before. Teach us to claim Your promises and expect You to move mountains when we pray.
- We pray for the 541 people groups in the 18 countries of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. Please lead them to biblical truth.
- Show us how to meet the practical and spiritual needs of refugees. May our church be known for our love of all people, no matter who they are or where they come from.
- We ask You to raise up urban missionaries to plant churches for the 806 people groups in the 20 countries of the Inter-European Division.
- Please raise up an army of workers to plant churches for the 948 people groups in the 38 countries of the Inter-American Division.
- Please teach us to proclaim our fundamental church beliefs with clarity, creativity, and biblical authenticity. May the love of Jesus be at the core of everything we believe.
- Lord, please prepare young people to plant churches for the 789 people groups in the 9 countries of the North American Division.
- We ask You to prepare volunteers to serve the 70 people groups in the Israel Field.
- We ask You to raise up medical missionaries to plant churches among the 830 people groups in the 11 countries of the East-Central Africa Division.
- We ask You to raise up prayer warriors to intercede for the 2,568 people groups in the 4 countries of the Southern Asia Division.
- Please let our families reveal Your love in our homes and communities. We ask You to bring harmony into homes, heal broken relationships, protect the vulnerable from abuse, and reveal Your sanctifying power in seemingly hopeless situations.
- We ask You to raise up nurses and doctors to plant new churches among the 1,978 people groups in the 22 countries in West-Central Africa Division.
- We pray for the 49 million people in the 19 least-reached cities of the Trans-European Division.
- We pray for our children. Please empower them to stand boldly for You when facing obstacles and pressure. Help them to make wise choices and stand for truth.
- Teach us to follow Christ's selfless example by meeting the daily needs of people close to us. Equip us to serve as medical missionaries, community volunteers, and friends to the needy.

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 1 — LESS IS MORE

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“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.” (Eph. 5:15, 16, ESV)

#### **Is More Truly More?**

Our lives are packed to the brim with so many things we want to pursue. In a society that is madly driven by consumerism and marketing, we are easily lured into believing that the more we have, the happier we are. Because of the tempting advertisements all around us, we wrongly desire to have it all. Sometimes we extend this thinking even to our work for God. We want to serve God, but at the same time, we don't want to miss out on anything else that crosses our path. And so we desperately try to harmonize our desire to serve God with the endless pursuit of more and more things. This leads to a whirlwind of activities. In a restless hurry, we fool ourselves into believing that we can follow God without letting go of everything else that vies for our attention. When we apply this false thinking to our walk with God, we are deceived.

#### **Being Willing to Let Go**

We cannot have it all—we cannot embrace both the world and its luring pleasures and the blessings of God. To think so is a fatal mistake. This mentality of consumerism infects our thinking and inflicts disastrous effects on our spiritual lives. We cannot have God on top of everything else, like icing on the cake, without purposefully making room for Him in the crowdedness of our hectic lives. We first must be willing to live with *less* to experience the blessings of things that matter *more*. We must let go of the things that distract us from God's presence and deplete our physical, mental, and spiritual energies. When we try to juggle jam-packed schedules at ever-increasing speeds as our to-do lists grow longer and longer, we quickly find ourselves exhausted physically and deeply depleted spiritually.

#### **Live With Less**

Is the clutter in your life holding you back from fully living for God? Crowded lives leave little room for the Creator of the universe. We must understand that less is more. We cannot experience more spiritual blessings, more prayer time, more of anything in our spiritual life if we only try to add it to an already full plate. Such overcrowding only leads to more emptiness. Instead, we must make an intentional decision to live purposefully with less so that we can enjoy more of what matters to God. Less is more!

Let's pray together.

## Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

*All prayer groups have different ways of praying together. We encourage you to spend the next 30-45 minutes in united prayer, in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads. We encourage short conversational prayers (1-3 sentences). This allows for more people to pray multiple times. Below are some examples of praying through Scripture based on the theme. You may pray through other passages also and include other subjects in your prayer time. See the Leader's Guide and World Church Prayer Requests for prayer ideas.*

### Praying God's Word — Eph. 5:15, 16

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil."

#### "Look Carefully Then How You Walk, Not as Unwise but as Wise"

*God, in our brokenness, we seek Your grace and provisions. We have filled our lives with too many activities and distractions. We need a reformation, a cleansing, a re-prioritization of the things that truly matter. Teach us what it means to live with less so we can focus on what matters most. We desire to be wise with wisdom from above. Guide us, we pray. Amen.*

#### "Making the Best Use of the Time"

*Precious Jesus, You always have perfect timing, and You know what needs to be said and done at each time in history. Thank You for Your perfect ministry to this world. Please teach us how we can make the best use of our time for You, especially in the context of the last days. Reveal to us where we waste our time and give us victory over the things we know are taking up too much space in our lives. Amen.*

#### "Because the Days Are Evil"

*God, we understand that the world is coming to an end very soon. The signs are all around us. Yet, at times we get so distracted by our busyness, or deceptions, that we forget that we are on the edge of eternity. Lead us into a total commitment to You and the ministry You have for us individually. Recalibrate our lives to be in tune with Your will. 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:* Fill My Cup, Lord (#493); We Would See Jesus (#494); Take Time to Be Holy (#500)

*Other Songs:* Change My Heart, O God; Seek Ye First; Into My Heart

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 2 — THE DANGER OF BEING BUSY FOR GOD

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“The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, ‘Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.’ For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves.” (Mark 6:30–32, ESV)

#### **Busyness in the Work for God**

Busyness is king in our world. Modern society and high-pressure consumerism have drilled one belief into us: the busier we are, the more respected we become. Busyness has become an indicator of our diligence and eagerness to do good and get ahead. But while we are busy *making a living*, we have forgotten to *live* and enjoy life, which is tragic. Perhaps even more tragic is the subtle danger that many committed followers of Christ have adopted: a mindset of busyness in their work for God. We often do it for the best possible reasons. We know that time is short. We want to accomplish the most for Him. Therefore, we strive to be busy. We want to be good stewards of our time and talents. It feels good to be busy for God, and sometimes we are tempted to think that God will reward our busyness for Him, only to discover that in our busyness for God, we have lost our living connection with our Redeemer. We are doing good things out of habit, not in the power of the Holy Spirit. And the busier we get, the more we deem ourselves in line with God’s purpose. Busy becomes the new norm. We are so busy glorifying how busy we are that we miss the moments in life that really matter. Busyness crushes our spiritual vitality. Hurry is the enemy of any love relationship, especially our relationship with the living God of Scripture. Love demands the attention of unhurried time.

#### **The Duty to Rest**

No wonder that the God of Scripture repeatedly calls us to stand still, to pause, to watch what He will do for His people (2 Chron. 20:17; Psalm 37:7). God encourages His children to un-hurry. He knows how quickly we lose sight of Him when our minds are wrapped in a whirlwind of human activities. One of the most beautiful insights into the danger of constant busyness for God is found when our Lord Jesus took the liberty in His own ministry to rest. Ellen White beautifully captures this important aspect of His ministry with His disciples: “They had been putting their whole souls into labor for the people, and this was exhausting their physical and mental strength. It was their duty to rest” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 360).

Busyness crushes our spiritual vigor and effectiveness. Hurry is the great enemy of our love for God. Rather than adding more items to our calendar, let’s intentionally reduce and make room for meaningful, soul-invigorating quiet time with our Creator and Savior.

Let’s pray together.

## Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

*All prayer groups have different ways of praying together. We encourage you to spend the next 30-45 minutes in united prayer, in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads. We encourage short conversational prayers (1-3 sentences). This allows for more people to pray multiple times. Below are some examples of praying through Scripture based on the theme. You may pray through other passages also and include other subjects in your prayer time. See the Leader's Guide and World Church Prayer Requests for prayer ideas.*

### Praying God's Word — Mark 6:30–32

"The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves."

#### "Come Away"

*Father, we have been so busy doing Your work that we have forgotten it is your work. Thank You for reminding us of our need to come away, to take a break, to take a breath. Thank You that we are not machines but human beings. Forgive us when we have made our busyness an idol or when we have built our worth on how much we accomplish for You. Please turn our busyness into faithfulness. Amen.*

#### "To a Desolate Place"

*God, we have surrounded ourselves with too much noise, too many things, too many distractions. Whether we spend our time working for the church or engaged in other endeavors, we recognize our need to step away and spend time reflecting and resting away from the busyness of life. Please give us the grace needed to carve out time alone with You daily to breathe and focus on what truly matters. Amen.*

#### "Rest a While"

*Loving Jesus, when You walked this Earth, You understood humanity's need for rest. Thank You for exemplifying the balanced life we ought to live. Show us what proper rest looks like and how we can rest regularly to recharge and refocus. 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:* In the Garden (#487); Near to the Heart of God (#495); He Hideth My Soul (#520)

*Other Songs:* I Cast All My Cares Upon You; You Are My Hiding Place; All in All

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 3 — THE BLESSING OF WAITING

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“Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10, ESV)

#### **The Biblical Virtue of Slowing Down**

In an age of constant movement and noise pollution, nothing is more critical than stillness and quiet. In our hectic modern life, daily urgencies demand our attention. We have become accustomed to a fast-food mentality where we expect things the quickest possible way. We have forgotten how to wait patiently, and this impatience can leak into our spiritual walk with devastating effects. The visual impulses and acoustic distractions of this hyper-connected age make it even harder to slow down and become still. Learning to wait in quietness and focusing our thoughts on divine matters as we talk with God may seem like a strange practice for many people today, but it is a biblical virtue that needs to be revived. Cultivating a quiet space that is not crowded with other urgencies and preserving unclaimed time is crucial to connecting with God. To slow down, to sit still, to breathe, to remind ourselves of God’s tender care, to patiently wait, and not to get nervous if God does not immediately answer our prayers—these are arts that we need to learn afresh.

#### **Benefits of Waiting**

Throughout Scripture, we encounter God’s people in an attentive attitude of waiting. Biblical writers often express their waiting expectation with a question: “How long, O Lord?” (Hab. 1:2; Dan. 8:13). There is no hope without waiting (Titus 2:13). There is no endurance without waiting (Rom. 5:3, 4). There is no patience without waiting (Rev. 14:12). There is no longing without waiting (Psalm 42:1). There is no life without waiting. There is no human history without waiting. Waiting is part of human existence.

While waiting, we often focus on the problems that are unpleasant and hope they will pass away. But waiting does not mean sitting passively, doing nothing, and hoping that an unpleasant situation will somehow disappear. From a biblical perspective, the primary purpose of waiting is to bring to light who I am and who I am becoming while I wait. The experience of waiting confronts me with a significant spiritual decision: In my impatience and doubt do I question God’s goodness and omnipotence? Or do I recognize that in waiting, I am confronted with a unique opportunity that will help me to become the person God wishes me to be? Through the experience of waiting, I can become the person I would never have been otherwise.

If we look at it this way, waiting becomes God’s means of transformation, to change us according to His will. Thus, waiting is truly an expression of God’s goodness and grace. It helps us to become more like God, who waits in great patience, not wanting anyone to be lost who could still be saved.

Let’s pray together.



**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — Psalm 46:10**

"Be still, and know that I am God."

**"Be Still"**

*God, we have been restless. We have allowed ourselves to become so busy and stressed, thinking that if we are not, then we are somehow worth less. Oh, God, we need Your help to slow down, to learn to simply be still. Our minds have been wired by social expectations to always be racing toward something. Help us to appreciate the virtue of stillness and to gain the blessings it brings. Speak the words "Be still" into our impatient hearts. Amen.*

**"Know that I Am God"**

*Dear Jesus, the fact that You are our God and Lord has massive implications for our lives. Yet we seem hesitant to make You Lord of all of our life. We desire control, and we can't seem to stop doing what we are doing. Teach us that You, the Almighty Creator, the One who fills eternity, are Lord; that You are able to take us and our plans beyond anything we can imagine if we only become still, wait, and recognize You for who You are. 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:* Have Thine Own Way, Lord (#567); Be Still, My Soul (#461); Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (#469)

*Other Songs:* In His Time; In Moments Like These; Open My Eyes, Lord

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 4 — THE FREEDOM OF A FOCUSED LIFE OF SIMPLICITY

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“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” (Matt. 6:16–18, ESV)

#### **Fasting Makes Space**

One way of creating space to live a life focused on God is fasting. Fasting means decluttering our minds and lives by deliberately making room for the movement of the Holy Spirit in us and by focusing on God and His Word. The Bible often mentions fasting in connection with prayer. Jesus fasted before He started His public ministry (Matt. 4:2; Luke 4:2). The apostles fasted and prayed to be guided by God (Acts 13:2, 3), and in the Old Testament, fasting was frequently practiced among believing men and women (1 Kings 21:9, 12; 2 Chron. 20:3; Ezra 8:21; Esther 4:3, 16; Isa. 58:6; Jer. 36:9; Dan. 9:3; Joel 2:12; John 3:5; etc.).

In contrast to wellness fasting, biblical fasting is not about observing a specific diet designed for weight loss and well-being. Instead, it is the conscious decision to abstain from food and distracting activities for a period of time to pray and commune with God. By temporarily giving up the familiar, we gain new spiritual freedom. During fasting and prayer, the focus of daily life changes: away from satisfying our own needs, away from our own works, and toward obedient listening to God. Biblical fasting expresses our desire to increase our dependence on God and pay attention to spiritual things that matter. This encompasses more than not eating; in fact, it challenges every area of our lives. In fasting, we acknowledge that we want to make space for God by reducing any distractions that crowd our attention and desire. We indicate that we want to seek and treasure God’s presence in our lives more than anything else.

#### **Abstain and Include**

How can we live this life of simplicity, where we learn to concentrate on things that truly matter? Just as we need to watch what we eat, we must be mindful of what we put before our eyes and what enters our ears. What we hear affects our thoughts just as much as what we see. What types of music, books, podcasts, or websites cause toxic thoughts or occupy your precious time with vanity? In addition to abstaining from certain things, you may need to deliberately include new habits to help you build up and create healthy, healing thoughts.

A life of simplicity, a mind unfrazzled, does not come from what the world tells us to pursue. A content heart comes from trusting God. When we learn to focus on Him, rather than on what others are doing, and when we practice letting go of things that distract us, we discover a simpler life of rest and peace with our Creator and Redeemer.

Let’s pray together.

**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — Matt. 6:16–18**

"And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

**"When You Fast"**

*Our loving Heavenly Father, thank You for providing us with whatever we actually need. In our excess and abundance, we often forget that too much of something is never good. Lord, fasting does not come naturally, and so we plead for Your strength to choose to abstain from indulgence and abstain from anything harmful, whether food, music, movies, shopping, etc. Also, show us how we can be more intentional in replacing what is not beneficial with what is. Help us to choose a holistic, healthy lifestyle. Amen.*

**"Like the Hypocrites"**

*Oh God, we desire a heart transformation. Forgive us for our hypocrisy, for whenever we say, teach, or preach one way, but live another way. We want to do the things we do for You from a heart that is surrendered to You, a heart that is motivated by love, a heart that is renewed by Your mercy and grace and the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit. May our fasting, and all our spiritual and daily activities, be a true expression of Your holy presence in our hearts. 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 Surrender All (#309); I'd Rather Have Jesus (#327); Be Thou My Vision (#547)

*Other Songs:* As the Deer; Humble Thyself in the Sight of the Lord; Unto Thee, O Lord

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 5 — FOCUSING ON THINGS THAT MATTER IN OUR PRAYERS

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“Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’” (Matt. 6:9, 10, ESV)

#### **A New Focus in Prayer**

Focusing on God and things that matter is important in our prayer life as well. Often our prayers are weak and ineffective because they center only around ourselves. We pray to God about what *we* wish to have. We focus on *our* needs and the challenges *we* face rather than on God.

Prayer that is pleasing to God has a refreshingly different focus. The focal point is no longer our “want-to-have list” but God Himself. This perspective is the key to a new prayer experience. Prayer that is pleasing to God first recognizes God as my faithful friend whose companionship I seek because *He* is important to me, not because I want something from Him. *Who He is*, is much more important than the things He gives me. Knowing Him is the reason I want to talk to Him in the first place. Without Him, my life is de-centered and lacks the proper perspective. More important than anything I can ask for should be my desire to be with Him. His presence and who He is become the center of true prayer.

#### **God-centered Prayer Transforms**

Prayer that is pleasing to God begins with a desire to be with Him. It does not start with my wishes and requests. When my prayer requests are not anchored in this loving relationship with Him, they circle more around myself than God and His will. Once I understand that my relationship with God is the center of prayer, my requests gain a totally new focus. I begin to think and pray from God’s perspective. I start to view my requests, my wishes, my yearnings, and my whole life through His eyes. This perspective ennobles prayer. Remove the relationship aspect from prayer, and prayer becomes one-sided, selfish, and wrong. God-centered prayer frees my thoughts from revolving around myself. It allows me to become honest with God. In the light of His love and holiness, I begin to see myself differently. The true purpose of prayer is not the fulfillment of my wishes but deepening my relationship with the life-changing God. It is so easy to ask God for something before I have enjoyed His companionship.

When I consciously think about God’s character, His qualities, and what He is able to do, and when I express my adoration in my own words, my prayers are filled with spiritual life, admiration, and awe. No longer are my prayers centered on my problems but on God, who is the Master of all my needs. Such prayer lifts me up into His presence. It does not change God; it changes me. Why not start praying like that? It will change your life.

Let’s pray together.

**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — Matt. 6:9, 10**

"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.'"

**"Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed Be Your Name"**

*Our kind Heavenly Father, You are God. You are almighty, all-knowing, wonderful, and magnificent. You are beautiful and marvelous. You are Truth, Righteousness, and Love. We desire to know You so much more. We want to daily appreciate Your character, Your abilities, Your personality, and Your will. Free us from our selfish focus, and make our prayers centered around You. Amen.*

**"Your Kingdom Come, Your Will Be Done"**

*Lord, Your kingdom is the only governmental entity we want to pledge our full allegiance to. You reign in love, truth, justice, and righteousness. Our ideas, plans, and methods are imperfect, but Your will is always perfect. Spread out Your kingdom in our hearts and lives today. Make known to us who You are. 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:* Holy, Holy, Holy (#73); How Great Thou Art (#86); Sweet Hour of Prayer (#478)

*Other Songs:* Father, I Adore You; His Name is Wonderful; Is He Worthy?; Jesus, Name Above All Names

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 6 — GRIT, PASSION, AND PERSEVERANCE

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“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” (Gal. 6:9, ESV)

#### **Spiritual Grit**

Grit is something we don't often associate with spiritual matters. But it is just as important in our daily pursuit of holiness as it is in other areas of life, from sports to learning to successful business transactions. Without grit, success is unlikely. Grit is the passion and perseverance of pursuing a goal we deeply care about. In order to reach our goal, we organize our lives in such a way that nothing distracts us. We need such grit in our spiritual walk with God, and we need it in a special way in our prayer life. Too often, we do not see the results of our prayer requests because we are not persistent in our prayers. Perhaps we get distracted or discouraged, or we give up in our hearts and do not believe that God can hear and act in ways far beyond our comprehension. In Luke 18, Jesus tells His disciples the story of a widow who persistently brought her case to an unjust judge. Although this judge had no regard for God or the woman, he eventually granted the widow's request because of her persistence (Luke 18:1-7). God, however, is not indifferent to our prayer requests as the unjust judge was. God is eager to help far more than we can even understand (Jer. 33:3).

What we need today, in our marriages, in our classrooms and dormitories, in our churches and homes, are people who pray. Not just those who talk about prayer, those who say they believe in prayer, or even those who can give nice explanations about prayer. We need people who actually take the time and pray!

#### **Persistence**

God does not work on the premise of faster and cheaper. Often in the great controversy between God and Satan we need persistent prayer. We must be passionate and persistent in our prayers because God's timetables often don't line up with our human understanding. God rarely takes the path of least resistance when working out His divine solutions. He is not interested in the easy way out but in the best way through! In our prayers, let us not settle for less or remain satisfied with shortsighted goals. God is pleased when we persevere in our prayers.

In the study room of my father, who was a successful evangelist and pastor, he had a quote from Ellen G. White that left a deep impression on me: “The greatest victories to the church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or the favor of men. They are those victories that are gained *in the audience chamber with God*, when earnest, agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 203, emphasis supplied).

Let's pray together.

**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — Gal. 6:9**

"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

**"Let Us Not Grow Weary of Doing Good"**

*Jesus, You are the most persevering Being in the universe. You did not give up in Your ministry of interceding and intervention. No matter what Satan and sinners throw at You, You are still You, and in love, You give Yourself to us. We are in awe, oh God. Teach us such spiritual, selfless persistence, especially in our prayer life. Make us prayer warriors who do not give up. Amen.*

**"In Due Season We Will Reap"**

*Our loving God, we praise You for allowing us to participate in Your mission on this planet. Thank You for the joy of service and the joy of engaging in the work of bringing people to You. Sometimes we feel discouraged and ready to give up, but we pray that You will give us the perseverance and spiritual grit needed to do the work You have called us to do. Thank You that You will bless and that we will see the fruit of this blessed ministry. 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:* Work, for the Night Is Coming (#375); Trust and Obey (#590); Higher Ground (#625)

*Other Songs:* I Shall Not Be Moved; Dare to Be a Daniel; He's Able

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 7 — THE VALUE OF BEING KIND

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“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35, ESV)

#### The Defining Quality

At the end of your life, if you could be remembered for just one character quality, what would that be? If just one trait depicted what you stood for and what you valued most, what would you choose? Many answers are possible, but one key aspect of God’s character should be reflected in all of our lives. In Titus 3:4, the Bible tells us that the kindness of God, our Savior, appeared to us when His love saved us.

Kindness! The kindness of God. Kindness is a universal language that can be understood by old and young, rich and poor, male and female, deaf or blind. Kindness knows no language barrier. It has a universal appeal, like music. A friendly smile, a helping hand in times of need, support when we feel discouraged, and a word of encouragement—all go a long way to make the hardships of our lives easier and more bearable. Kindness does not cost you very much, but it can make a huge difference in the lives of those who experience it, as well as in the lives of those who share it. Kindness is a win-win situation.

#### A Lovable Christian

Jesus knew that the kindness of His followers would serve as a powerful testimony of their faith. Shortly before His betrayal and death, after washing His disciples’ feet, Jesus told them, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). Ellen White echoes this insight: “The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 470). When we deal with others in kindness, our love can reach hearts in unique ways beyond the borders of religion, ethnicity, and social status. I believe God created us with the desire to receive and share kindness, and doing so reflects the character of the God we adore. In Jonah 4:2 we read that God is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness. The theme of God’s lovingkindness permeates the entire Bible, Old and New Testament.

Our acts of kindness bring comfort and joy not only to human beings but also to the heart of God. Kindness does not focus on the negative situations around us or on other people. Instead, it mirrors God’s character and the way He deals with us. Let us focus on what matters in life and be known as people who are kind to all.

Let’s pray together.



**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — John 13:35**

"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

**"By This All People Will Know That You Are My Disciples"**

*God, how often is our mission outreach unbalanced? We make theology, prophecy, fundamental beliefs, lifestyle, etc. the main focus. And while these things are good, true, important, and have a vital role and place, You clearly preached and, most importantly, lived out the reality that love is the strongest revelation of truth. Help us to live love and kindness together with truth, as You have for eternity. Amen.*

**"If You Have Love for One Another"**

*Dear Jesus, forgive us for our lack of selfless love. We truly have not fathomed Calvary-love. Forgive us for how we think about each other, what we say about each other, and how we treat each other. Please, Lord, fill us with Your divine love. Make us ambassadors of love and kindness. May people see Jesus in us and in how we treat each other. Bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, we pray. 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:* Lord, I Want to Be a Christian (#319); So Send I You (#578); 'Tis Love That Makes Us Happy (#579)

Other Songs: Make Me a Servant; We Are His Hands; Micah 6:8 Scripture Song

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## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 8 — PRACTICING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

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“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe.” (Heb. 12:28, NASB95)

#### **An Affirmative Mindset**

There is a mindset that matters significantly to God. In the Bible, we are repeatedly encouraged to practice this particular behavior because it is pleasing to God and a blessing to us. This attitude is gratitude. The book of Hebrews says, “Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe” (Heb. 12:28, NASB). Gratitude pleases God and positively impacts our own lives because it helps us focus on what is positive. Like a muscle, it strengthens when you exercise it purposefully by acknowledging your blessings.

God invites His children to be people of gratitude. In 1 Thess. 5:18 (NASB), the apostle Paul writes, “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.” Giving thanks means remembering that someone has done something good for us and expressing that gratitude in thoughtful words. Developing an attitude of gratitude opens our eyes to beautiful details in nature and in other people. Gratitude allows us to be thankful for simple blessings without demanding perfection. This is important because, on this side of eternity, life will never run entirely smoothly. But life doesn’t have to be perfect to be enjoyed! Beauty meets and greets us in many ways. The fragrant smell of a flower, the grandeur of the starry sky on a clear night, the affectionate twinkle in a friend’s eyes—each reminds us of the beauty God has prepared for those who love Him.

#### **A Shift of Our Attention**

By practicing gratitude, we shift our attention from the imaginary things we don’t have to the real blessings we do enjoy. Gratitude grows out of an awareness of God’s generosity and involves a curiosity to explore the specific ways He reveals His love to us. Such gratitude widens the horizon of life and increases our capacity to experience pleasure and satisfaction.

Recent studies show that gratitude not only improves the well-being of the giver and the recipient but may also be good for those who witness it. Watching an act of gratitude between two people can cause observers to feel more warmth and affinity toward them both, according to a recent *New York Times* article.\* Why not practice what God has called us to do: developing an attitude of gratitude that will change our encounters with the people around us for the better and make the world a bit more pleasant. Thank God for the gift of gratitude.

Let’s pray together.

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\*Christina Caron, “Gratitude Really is Good for You,” *New York Times*, June 8, 2023.

**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — Heb. 12:28**

"Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe."

**"Let Us Show Gratitude"**

*Our loving God, we struggle when it comes to returning to You an appropriate amount of gratitude for all You have done for us. Eternity is not long enough to give You the thanks due. Yet, we pray You will be pleased with our thanksgiving. We also ask You to help us lay aside cynicism, judgmentalism, and pride, so we can recognize the blessings for which we can be grateful. Help us take time to express gratitude to You and others more than we express our complaints and requests. Develop in us a genuine attitude of gratitude. Amen.*

**"Since We Receive a Kingdom Which Cannot Be Shaken"**

*Lord, You are a generous God. Not only offering us salvation at an eternal cost to You but also giving us Your kingdom. We don't realize the extent of the privileges You provide for us. Please show us daily what an honor it is to be Your child. Thank You for this immense love and blessing. 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:* Joyful, Joyful (#12); Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart (#27); Come, Ye Thankful People (#557)

*Other Songs:* Give Thanks With a Grateful Heart; Thank You, Lord, for Saving My Soul; Count Your Blessings

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 9 — THE BLESSING OF THE SABBATH

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“If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” (Isa. 58:13, 14, ESV)

#### Sign of Our Identity

One blessing that truly matters for human life is Sabbath rest. The Sabbath day reminds us of our origin and that God is our Creator (Exod. 20:8-11). It also testifies to God’s graciousness as the loving Savior who delivered His people from the bondage of slavery (Deut. 5:12-15). As such, Sabbath celebration is a powerful sign of our identity as human beings. This identity is not derived from economic success or our level of productivity. Nor is our identity determined by whether we are employers or employees. The Sabbath is God’s invitation to rest in Him and enjoy what He has graciously provided.

The Sabbath, rightly understood, is an exercise in un-hurry. It teaches us to rest from rushing, performing, and achieving. It is a weekly declaration by my heart and mind that God is more important than my to-do list and my output. It acknowledges a shift in my priorities and makes visible my loyalties. Sabbath allows me to slow down and rest in God’s presence. It lets me enjoy His promise that He is enough. Although not engaging in mundane business activities on Sabbath is an important expression of our loyalty to God, resting in God’s love and care is far more than abstaining from work. Sabbath rest is fulfilled in our deliberate and meaningful communion with our Creator. When we learn to rest in the reality of God’s unfailing love, and when His goodness becomes our focus, we experience joy, shalom, and a desire to worship God with our entire being.

Thus, the joyful and faithful keeping of the Sabbath becomes a significant sign of who we are and whom we belong to. To practice Sabbath spirituality with moments of peace, joy, and calm requires much more than abstaining from work on the seventh day. It involves deliberate planning that prepares us during the week for the highlight of Sabbath shalom. As such, the Sabbath creates a meaningful counterculture that becomes visible in a distinctly different lifestyle. The Sabbath protects us from becoming driven by consumerism. Rather than striving to gain more and more in an endless race for power and dominion, we are invited to pause and honor God and His goodness and grace. This is a stark contrast to our pride and selfishness. By practicing the Sabbath, we become apprentices of Jesus Christ, who kept the Sabbath as was His custom (Luke 4:16).

To keep the Sabbath holy, to set it apart, and to dedicate it to God for His special purpose helps us to focus on what really matters in our spiritual walk with Jesus. Sabbath is not just a day to sleep in and do nothing; instead, it is a day to worship the only true God and thus becomes a meaningful sign that we have reoriented our lives toward the living God of Scripture.

Let’s pray together.

**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — Isa. 58:13, 14**

"If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

**"Call the Sabbath a Delight"**

*Father, what an incredible gift You have given us in the Sabbath. Thank You that we are not destined for a life of 24/7 busyness but that we were created to experience communion, shalom, and peace with You in a special way every seventh day. God, too often, we have made Sabbath the busiest day of the week and have lost sight of its purpose. Forgive us, please. Teach us how to keep the Sabbath holy and make it a delight for all in our sphere of influence. Amen.*

**"Not . . . Talking Idly"**

*Jesus, we give You honor and glory, for You are holy and worthy. Thank You that the Sabbath is a day in which we are freed to focus on You, Your Word, Your Creation, and being a blessing to others. Yet, too often, we have spent these holy hours filled with idle conversations and activities that do not honor You. Please forgive us. Teach us how to make the Sabbath uplifting, beautiful, and holy. 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:* Day Is Dying in the West (#51); O Day of Rest and Gladness (#382); Wonderful Peace (#466)

*Other Songs:* This Is the Day; Surely the Presence of the Lord, A Temple Made of Time

## Priorities of Faith

### DAY 10 — BE RICH IN WHAT MATTERS — BE MORE ANALOG

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“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” (Heb. 10:24, 25, ESV)

#### **Analog Spirituality**

Biblical spirituality is analog, not digital. It is based on personal and tangible practices between real people and the living God. Tangible things are by their very nature analog, not virtual. While the God of the Bible is invisible to the human eye, He has called us to practice very specific analog things that express our relationship with Him. Take our works, for example. The practical things we do for God or for other human beings are always analog in character. Or think about our Sabbath observance. To keep the Sabbath holy involves several specific analog practices like rest or worship. Resting from our mundane activities and making choices that reflect the holiness of the Sabbath day is never a virtual experience; it is always analog. This holds true for worship experiences in fellowship with real human beings in church on Sabbath mornings. While it is possible to join a digital worship service via the Internet, the ultimate worship experience finds fulfillment in analog commitments and participation with real people in physical places. Practical and real acts of kindness, grace, forgiveness, compassion, awe, and adoration are meaningful only when we experience them analog. No virtual reality can replace or surpass an analog human touch, kiss, helping hand, the comfort of a heartfelt embrace, the joy of physically felt laughter, or the firmness of a welcoming handshake. You cannot celebrate the practice of foot-washing, or eating and drinking the emblems of communion virtually. What Jesus has instituted through His own example is to be remembered physically in a way we can touch and taste.

#### **Tangible Faith**

Even the practice of prayer and fasting, encouraged throughout Scripture, is an analog act in time and space. Our faith in God always has an analog dimension in which it becomes visible. While we human beings can do all kinds of things virtually, our relationship with God and the expression of our spiritual walk with Jesus can never be reduced to virtual reality.

Consider all the blessings that real-life, analog acts can bring. “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver” (Prov. 25:11, ESV). A helping hand in support of a tangible need; a gentle touch that signals “You are not alone!”; the value of a handwritten postcard or letter that you hold in your hands; the extension of undeserved forgiveness and grace that results in a transformed personal relationship; the sharing of food with those who are hungry; the experience of hospitality by those who are traveling or do not have a place to stay. These and many other blessings want to be experienced analog. Enjoy the accomplishments of the digital world—but remember to be more analog in your faith.

Let's pray together.

**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****Praying God's Word — Heb. 10:24, 25**

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

**"Stir Up One Another to Love and Good Works"**

*God, Thank You for revealing to us what true love is. Thank You for becoming human and showing us through Jesus a love supreme. Thank You, that You stepped into our world and lived an analog life with us and for us. In this digital day and age, remind us of the absolute necessity to be engaged in the analog world with acts of love and kindness. God, we are too often addicted to our devices and the online world. Free us, so we can live for You by serving others. Amen.*

**"Not Neglecting to Meet Together"**

*Father, the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the isolation which the digital world had already been leading us into for years. The illusion of true connection through virtual means will never replace the importance and blessing of real face-to-face interactions. Now that the pandemic is over help us to prioritize direct human connections, showing kindness, love, care, and support through tangible acts, words, and touch. 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:* Blest Be the Tie that Binds (#350); Let Us Break Bread Together (#403); We Have This Hope (#214)

*Other Songs:* Bind Us Together, Lord; We Are One in the Spirit; Side by Side

## Priorities of Faith

### **SUPPLEMENTAL READING — THE BLESSING OF DIGITAL SABBATH DETOX**

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“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” (Exod. 20:8–11, ESV)

#### **The Sabbath Rightly Understood**

Seventh-day Adventists are good at explaining the historical change of the Lord’s Day from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week. We are sometimes less successful in demonstrating the beauty and blessing of keeping the Sabbath holy. For many, the Sabbath has deteriorated into a dreaded legalistic routine where they abstain from certain work. It is no longer a delight that delivers us joy in our walk with God. Unless we rediscover the delightful aspects of joyful Sabbath celebration, nobody will be attracted to experiencing the Sabbath as God’s blessing. The Sabbath, rightly understood, offers wonderfully practical blessings to a generation that is shaped relationally by using new technology in an age of digital connectedness. The Sabbath offers a perfect opportunity to clarify our choices about how we are going to live in the present. In a time when few people put any limits on texting, social media, or other uses of digital technology, the Sabbath offers an experience that will enrich the rest of our work week as well.

#### **Digital Detox**

Skimming media-rich web pages exposes us to endless information, but we become less able to engage in deep, undistracted thinking. When people get used to quick browsing, scanning, and one-time reading, the ability to do in-depth and focused reading diminishes. It becomes physiologically more difficult to follow an extended line of thinking and more challenging to reflect deeply on the words and ways of God. This has drastic implications for our relationship with God because Jesus tells us that our brain is essential in expressing our love of God (Mark 12:30). Digital technology does not develop the brain circuits needed for contemplation, undistracted prayer, and other dimensions of spiritual life. But this is precisely the type of thinking that is fostered by a digital detox, by slowing down, and by embracing and practicing God’s Sabbath. Imagine the blessings from one full day every week when we turn off our cell phones, when we keep our computers and tablets turned off, when we deliberately refrain from browsing the web and do not check e-mails. Instead, we purposefully engage in activities and relationships that invite us to be physically and mentally present. Imagine a Sabbath where you extend grace by offering undistracted conversation and keep your focus on the family and friends around you. Imagine a day of rest where you make time to reflect on God’s Word creatively and deeply. Imagine quality time where you share your insights and experience with others and also listen attentively and without interruption to their stories. Such a Sabbath practice will reconnect us to God, renew our relationships, and grace our spiritual journey in ways both beautiful and profound.