

# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER

**May 1 – June 9, 2023**

*Materials prepared by the Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. A project of the Revival and Reformation Initiative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Visit <https://revivalandreformation.org/40days> for more resources.*

## **Week 1: May 1-6 | Theme: Revival & Reformation**

Welcome to 40 Days of Prayer!

Time to get ready for an amazing journey!

As we prepare to start the 40 Days of Prayer together (May 1 – June 9), pray that God would prepare your heart, and that He will take you beyond where you are currently to an even more living and vibrant experience with Jesus.

### **Here is what to expect:**

- Each **Day** you will gather with your group for daily lesson, heart challenge and inspirational devotional weekly.
- **Daily** prayer requests will be suggested. These prayer requests are only to get you started praying. Pray as the Holy Spirit leads you and your group.
- On **Friday** we will gather for our Sabbath Worship and Welcome via Zoom. Sabbath Worship we will gather as a church and suggested Prayer Request will be provided.
- Each group will select fasting days, fasting objectives and prayer points.
- Finally, we will close out with a grand prayer event on June 10<sup>th</sup> to celebrate all that God will do.

It's that simple. Take this journey with your group and church family and we welcome your friends, neighbors, co-workers and family members. Prayer partners are great to have, so pray about who to invite with you on this journey.

### **Four ways to take this 40 Days of Prayer experience even deeper:**

1. **Dig deeper:** Pray earnestly, study deeply, meditate on the Word.
2. **Choose 7 names:** Pray and ask God who you should pray for during 40 Days of Prayer. After praying, choose 7 (or more) names of individuals you feel God asking you to specifically focus on. Make a list on your phone, or on a piece of paper, and keep it visible and accessible. Maybe make a few reminders on your phone, or your calendar to

pray specifically for these 7 names during the day. Claim 1 John 5:14-16 as you pray for them each day and watch what God will do in answer to your fervent prayers.

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**3. Pray with others:** Get to know the members of your group and pray often and pray together.

**4. Fast to feast:** Pray about the possibility of setting aside some things during the 40 days so that you can more clearly hear God's call and respond to His voice. We're not advising you to fast from, but perhaps you might be impressed to turn off the Television, get off social media, step away from secular entertainment, rich desserts, or some other activity that you feel God convicting you to surrender during this time. Remember, we don't earn God's favor by abstinence in any form, but as one has said, "We fast from the world so we can feast on Jesus."

Is feasting on Jesus your true heart's desire? If so, God has something special in store for you during this coming 40 Days of Prayer.

For today, ask God what He's wanting from you during the 40 Days of Prayer as you read the following inspirational challenge, "God Still Calls."

Prayers for your journey,

*The Revival and Reformation Team*

## Pre-Launch – April 30 - Devotional Thought

### **"God Still Calls"**

By Don MacLafferty

God is always calling His people to Himself. The Bible is filled with stories of those who have responded to the call and of those who have rejected the call.

God called and Adam and Eve hid themselves. (Genesis 3:9,10)

God called and Noah built an ark for a flood the world said would never come. (Genesis 6:14-22)

God called and Abram and Sarai left their family, home, and country. (Genesis 12:1-4)

God called and Jacob wrestled and cried out, "I will not let You go unless You bless me." (Genesis 32:26)

God called and Moses first gave excuses, and then told Pharaoh “Let My people go.” (Exodus 8:20-32)

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God called and Joshua fell on his face, and then marched around Jericho thirteen times. (Joshua 5:14-6:15)

God called and Gideon destroyed Baal’s altar, blew the trumpet, and routed the Midianites. (Judges 6:27-7:22)

God called and Samuel ran to Eli three times before answering, “Speak, for Your servant is listening.” (1 Samuel 3:10)

God called and Elijah confronted Israel on Mount Carmel, rebuilt God’s altar, and prayed for fire. (1 Kings 18:21-38)

God called and Jonah ran away, was swallowed by a fish, and then called Nineveh to judgment. (Jonah 1-4)

God called and Isaiah whispered in awe, “Here am I, send me!” (Isaiah 6:8)

God called and Philip ran up to the Ethiopian’s chariot and made a disciple for Christ. (Acts 8:29,30)

God called and Saul of Tarsus asked, “Who are You, Lord?”, fasted three days, then proclaimed the One he had hated as “the Son of God.” (Acts 9:5-9, 20)

God called and Ananias laid his hands on the man who had come to persecute him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus...has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 9:10-17)

God called and Peter risked both ministry and reputation to preach Jesus to the gospel thirsty Cornelius. (Acts 10:9-48)

God called and John fell at Jesus’ feet like a dead man. (Revelation 1:17)

In Jesus’ last love letter, He calls out to His last day people from the outside - looking in to where He longs to be in our hearts: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20)

This is His call to all—children, teens, and adults now. If we are waiting for another call, it will soon be too late. He calls you and me with all the love of our Father God, His love as Savior and Lord, and the love of the Holy Spirit.

This is His call for personal revival and personal witnessing. Down through the ages He has always called His people. Now there is an increasing intensity in His voice, for He says, "I am coming quickly..." (Revelation 22:7) He has been preparing a place in Heaven so we can be where He is. (John 14:3)

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Time is running out. This is no time to respond to His call by hiding like Adam and Eve. This is no time to be confused with His voice like Samuel "who did not yet know the Lord" (I Samuel 3:7). This is no time to run the wrong way like Jonah.

Now is the time to fall on our face like the apostle John before Jesus Christ, to return to Him, and to come back to the altar and worship Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

God still calls, and today He's calling *you!*

*Don MacLafferty is founder/president of In Discipleship. God has moved on Don and his wife April's heart to call young and old to a daily revival with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. They mobilize churches and schools to partner in equipping parents to disciple their children and prepare them for mission.*

### **Heart Challenge**

There is a reason you read the words above. God is orchestrating events in your life to have specific opportunities to hear His call. His call has come to you today. It is a call to step into a deep living experience of personal revival with Him. It is a call to follow Jesus wherever He leads. Are you ready to answer that call?

Are you ready to follow His call today to an even deeper, vibrant, living, experience with Him and His Word?

### **10 Prayer Requests – As You Prepare Your Heart for 40 Days of Prayer**

- Pray that God would prepare your heart for what He is about to do.
- Pray that you will recognize God's personal and loving call in your life.
- Pray that God's Word would become more living and real.
- Pray you would hear His voice speaking personally to your heart each day.
- Pray that prayer would truly become the essential breath of your soul.
- Pray over Psalms 139:23-24.
- Pray that God would give you courage and strength to remove any distractions in your life that might keep you from hearing His voice during these 40 Days of Prayer.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would give you a deeper, living, vibrant walk with Jesus.
- Pray about who you can invite to join you in prayer during this 40 Days of Prayer.
- Pray about what 7 names to pick for 40 Days of Prayer.

## Day 1 (May 1)

### A Revival of True Godliness

*Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? – Psalm 85:6*

*A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. – 1 SM, p. 121*

### Heart Challenge

God is the only source of true revival. Revival is our most urgent need. Do you sense your need for a true revival? Have you realized its urgency? Do you believe that the Father is more than willing to give you the Holy Spirit? No matter where you are or how dead you may be feeling, take heart and believe His promise. The powerful truth is, that our God has resurrection power. He can revive us again, jump-starting our spiritual life back again.

Will you plead for personal revival today?

### Prayer Requests

- • Pray for personal revival and don't let go until God answers.
- • Pray that if there's anything hindering God from doing a deeper work in your life that He will reveal that.
- • Pray for your list of 7 names, by name.
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you specific opportunities today to witness.
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide the mission of our worldwide church.

## Day 2 (May 2)

### Humility - Seeking - Turning

*If my people who are called by my name 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*

*Repentance, humility, a broken heart, and a contrite spirit are the offerings that God accepts.* – Review and Herald, 12/19/1899

### **Heart Challenge**

Sin is so grievous and terrible, that nothing that we can ever do, no amount of good deeds, can ever undo the chasm that sin has caused. But God, in His infinite mercy, is not asking us to do what we cannot do for ourselves. He accepts the simple humble admission that we need Him. Do you feel your need for God's forgiveness? For His healing? You can have it, today! Simply turn to Jesus right now in prayer and confess your need. Then choose to trust in His all-sufficient grace to empower your walk as you turn from wickedness and turn to His righteousness.

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for God to make evident your great need of His grace.
- • Pray that God will help you trust His power to gain the victory in your personal daily struggles with sin.
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on your pastor and church.
- • Pray for a spirit of prayer to saturate the hearts of all in positions of leadership.
- • Pray that God will mend any broken relationships in your life that need to be restored and give you a heart of repentance and true humility if you wounded another.

## **Day 3 (May 3)**

### **Revival and Reformation – A Blended Experience**

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.* – Revelation 3:20

*A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.* – 1 SM, p.128

### **Heart Challenge**

The transformation of our lives into individuals who reveal the love of Jesus is the work of a lifetime. This work takes place as the Holy Spirit brings spiritual life to us. God's resurrection power revives us and, as a result, our hunger for Jesus increases. But it doesn't end there. The beauty of revival is that it is ongoing and leads to a reformation of every aspect of our lives, every thought, and every behavior.

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Do you sometimes long more for revival than reformation? Are you scared that if you surrender a belief, thought pattern, indulgence, or behavior, that it would take away the pleasure in life? That it would make your life less exciting?

Remember, the same God who you know as the forgiving, loving, kind, and gracious Father, that same God also desires to bring genuine reformation in your life. Will you trust His perfect will today? Will you invite Jesus, not just to the door of your heart, but to come inside, to make Himself at home, to spend quality time with you, helping you rearrange your life, declutter your heart, fix what is broken, and clean out the dirt, dust, and grime that sin has created?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for God to give you a heart that is willing to live in complete obedience to His will. Pray for victory over those specific sins that you still struggle with.
- • Pray for any young people and believers you know who are struggling from addiction, depression, or other mental health issues.
- • Prayer for our church members in Eastern Europe, that God would intervene and be glorified in this ongoing painful crisis.
- • Pray for believers who are facing religious persecution right now, such as in Asia and the Middle East.
- • Pray for your list of 7 names.

## **Day 4 (May 4) Testimony - Jerry Page**

### **“40 Days of Prayer and My Brother Alan”**

By Jerry Page

My older brother, Alan, was very wild as a young person, ending up separated from the Lord and church most of his life. His self-centered life eventually cost him his first marriage to divorce. His health care career had made him a lot of money, but then he lost most of it. Occasionally he tried to become more involved with the church, but his lifestyle and habits always drew him back into a

life without the Lord. Our family, including our parents, all prayed for Alan for years to wholly give his life to Jesus.

In the fall of 2010, my young pastoral son, Zac, and his wife, Leah, decided to make Alan one of seven people to focus on during a 40 Days of Prayer emphasis at Andrews University. About that time, I also felt deeply impressed to strongly plead for his salvation. Amazing things began to happen as God allowed circumstances in Alan's life.

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Major traumas began to attack Alan. His second wife left him, and his diabetes grew worse, leading to the amputation of a leg. Everything seemed to be going wrong for him. But one day while lying in a hospital bed, Alan finally reached out to Jesus and said, "I give my life totally to you". We all praised the Lord.

His precious daughter, Christy, helped Alan work on building his relationship back up with God and the church. He became on fire witnessing to others and giving out literature for a while. But, as you know, Satan's forces don't give up easily when they see one of their captives finding God. He began slipping into his old habits, and was up and down, finally feeling he was too bad to be saved and giving up on his spiritual journey again.

Alan told me one day he felt that he just could not make needed changes and would not be able to live forever with the Lord. I shared again scripture verses about the power of our Lord to save us and urged him not to give up. I said, "Your family will not settle for that, and we are going to intensely keep praying for you. Jesus can save you!"

Christy kept taking him to a small church plant where they loved Alan and he enjoyed their fellowship. She talked him into going to a diabetes recovery seminar. He laughingly told us that he got rid of all the junk food in his refrigerator like they said, and there was nothing left!

On Friday evening a local church evangelist began a evangelistic series and this small church plant participated. Christy took Alan to the first meeting that night. At the ending appeal the evangelist urged people to mark their card if they wanted to be in heaven with Jesus. She said Alan marked his commitment in large letters – "Surrendered and covered by Jesus' righteousness again!"

That night Alan was found on his kitchen floor dead from a massive stroke. What a God we serve. He found a way to save my brother Alan at the very last minute of his life! Alan was 75 when he died; our family and others had prayed for him his entire life!



Have you been praying for someone for years and not seen them come to Jesus yet? Never, never give up!

As I conducted Alan's memorial service and listened to the joyful praises of two divorced wives, two loving daughters, many extended family relatives, partying friends, and work associates, my heart was so full of joy and praise to Jesus for His power to save anyone willing, at any time! My dear parents had passed away many years before Alan finally came back to Jesus. What a surprise that will be on that resurrection morning as they hug Alan and begin forever with Jesus together!

I urge you to really utilize these 40 Days of Prayer. Just imagine what our infinite God can do for you and through you as you urgently lift prayer requests to Him! He is "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us!" (Ephesians 3:20, NKJV).

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*Jerry Page is Ministerial Secretary for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

### **Heart Challenge**

Is there someone in your life who is stuck in deep darkness? Or maybe someone you know who walked away from God, or who never seems to be able to stick with Jesus? There is hope for that person, even if all seems hopeless. And we should never give up praying, interceding, and laboring for the salvation of these precious individuals.

Who comes to your mind as you reflected upon today's testimony? What names may need your daily and continual intercession?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray that God will teach you how to "stand in the gap" for those in need during these 40 days of Prayer.
- • Pray for your list of 7 specific people and pray about any specific needs you know.
- • Pray for provision for those who have recently lost their homes or loved ones through fire, flood, sickness or any other natural disasters.
- • Pray for any missionaries you know, who are away from their home or family, that they may be filled with joy in their ministry.

### **Day 5 (May 5) Prayer Request Friday:**

- • Pray for a special Sabbath blessing today, and that God would speak to you in a personal way.
- • Pray for those 7 names on your list.

- • Pray for your neighbors who do not know God.
- • Pray for more spirit filled and consecrated workers in God's vineyard.
- • Pray how God might be asking you to work more specifically in His service.

## Day 6 (May 6) Prayer Requests Sabbath:

- • Pray for opportunities to personally mentor and disciple new believers.
- • Pray for God's will for the upcoming church elections and appointment of new leaders.
- • Pray for the 7 names on your prayer list.
- Pray for our Upcoming Revelation Seminar

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## Week 2: May 7-13 | Theme: Mission - Get Involved

### Day 7 (May 7) Devotional Thought - Ted Wilson

#### **“Mission – Get Involved!”**

By Ted N. C. Wilson

We are living in a time of unprecedented change. God asks His remnant people, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, to prepare the way of the Lord, to receive the power of the Holy Spirit through the latter rain, and to be involved in His mission.

It is time for the final loud cry. . .the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. Each of us is called to partner with the Heavenly Sower, Jesus Christ, in participating in the mission of the church to proclaim God's last message of love, righteousness, redemption, and the prophetic warning heralding Christ's soon return.

Total Member Involvement means everyone doing something for the Lord! Everyone a sower, everyone involved in mission, everyone saying, “Yes, Lord, I will go and proclaim your Word!” As our 2022 General Conference Session theme says, “Jesus is Coming! Get involved!”

The gospel of Mark, chapter 4, records Jesus speaking to thousands by the Sea of Galilee. Around them on the plain and hillsides beyond, the listeners could see sowers and reapers busily casting seed and harvesting the early grain.

Using the scene as an illustration, Jesus said, “Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth;

and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred.' And He said to them, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'" (Mark 4:3-9, NKJV)

"The sower sows the word" (Mark 4:14). Matthew 13:37 indicates that the Sower of good seed is the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. In that wonderful volume, *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 36, Ellen White says, "His servants in like manner must go forth to sow." It is our privilege, as followers of Christ in these last days of earth's history, to partner with Him in His mission by sowing seeds of truth.

The passage continues. "And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts" (v. 15). The precious Word of God falls on the ears of inattentive hearers like a hard pathway that has no depth.

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Verses 16-17 say, "These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately, they stumble."

This seed cannot find deep soil to grow. Since the roots do not go deep into the soil of communion with Christ every day, persecution and temptation take their toll. "Many feel a sense of estrangement from God, a realization of their bondage to self and sin; they make efforts for reform; but they do not crucify self" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 48). Stay close to God and resist being a "stony-ground" hearer.

"Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful" (vs. 18, 19). Again from *Christ's Object Lessons*: "Grace can thrive only in the heart that is being constantly prepared for the precious seeds of truth" (p. 50). Stay close to the Lord through a study of the Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy and constant prayer.

"But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit; some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred" (v. 20). God intends that all of us will be "good-ground hearers" trusting implicitly in the righteousness of Christ, and saying, "Lord, I Will Go" sow Your Word. Everyone has a part to play in God's last great mission of warning and hope.

"Jesus is coming! Get involved!"

*Ted N.C. Wilson is the President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist.*

## **Heart Challenge**

Every sermon we hear, every Scripture we read, God is sowing seeds. Often it is very encouraging, at times it can be challenging, but we can rest assured, that God's powerful Word will do its intended work in our hearts and lives if we let Him, that is if we receive the Word, digest it, keep it, and do it.

The purpose of receiving God's word and letting it transform our lives is so that we can share its good news message with the people around us. The Divine Sower makes us co-laborers with Him. Will you open your heart to receive His seeds today? Will you join His mission to share His seeds with whoever He brings across your path?

## **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for a fresh understanding of God's Word and for an open heart so that the Word can reshape your personal beliefs and values.
- • Pray for our brothers and sisters in Shanghai.
- • Pray for courage for our church members in Russia and the Ukraine.

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- • Pray for a children's book and magazine that have recently been written specifically for the Ukrainian people, that these special resources will be timely and reach many hearts for the kingdom.
- • Pray that the appeal "Jesus is Coming! Get Involved!" will take urgent priority in your daily life.

## **Day 8 (May 8)**

### **You Are The Light**

*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. – Matthew 5:14-16*

*Humanity has in itself no light. Apart from Christ we are like an unkindled taper, . . . But when we turn toward the Sun of Righteousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence. Christ's followers are to be more than a light in the midst of men. They are the light of the world . . . Angels of glory wait to communicate through you heaven's light and power to souls that are ready to perish. – Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 40*

## Heart Challenge

Did you read the quote shared above? Maybe read it again. Do you realize that angels are waiting to work through you to reach lost people? Isn't this amazing?

You are invited not only to be filled with the Holy Spirit for your personal sanctification, but to actively participate in sharing the truth, love, and righteousness of Jesus to a world whose time is running out.

Think about your family, your friends, your neighbors, your co-workers. Ask God to show you who needs the light of Jesus in their life? Who should you pray for and also specifically contact this week?

## Prayer Requests

- • Pray with urgency for the 7 names on your list.
- • Pray for God to help you see the needs of the people you are praying for and for wisdom in how to help them.

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- • Pray for the Adventist medical institutions in your area, and around the world, to be a light for His glory in reaching those who need healing and encouragement.
- • Pray for the believers struggling in Sudan as economic turmoil and erratic rains drive up prices and reduce harvests.
- • Pray that God will break the chains that hold so many people in spiritual bondage.

## Day 9 (May 9)

### Reaching Your Family

*But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. – 1 Timothy 5:8*

*“. . . you must be earnest, firm, and decided to do your duty in your family, and take them with you if possible. You should spare no effort to prevail upon them to accompany you on your heavenward journey.” – The Adventist Home, p. 352*

## Heart Challenge

We all have immediate or extended family members who have not yet fallen in love with Jesus and decided to live faithfully for Him. Or maybe they once followed Jesus and they have now walked away. Maybe some are atheists or have other reasons for their decision. Or maybe they have never had a chance to fully hear, understand and see the gospel in words and actions.

You have a responsibility to do all that is within your power to gently, kindly, and with much wisdom and love reach out to those family members, showing them that you care, and at the right time pointing them to the truth and love of Jesus.

Will you prayerfully do this important work of intercession and ministry to your non-believing/non-Adventist/backslidden family members? Will you commit to be more intentional in your outreach to them?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for your family. Are there some members you have struggles with? Pray for them specifically, and for yourself, as you seek ways to minister to them, pointing them to Jesus through your words and actions.
- • Pray for the backslidden members of your churches and congregations.
- • Pray that God will give your children (or your spiritual children) strength to stand against Satan's attacks and deceptions. Claim Isa. 49:25 as you pray.
- • Pray for the safety and preservation of the faith of your children. Pray that they will catch a fire to be involved in personal mission.

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- Pray that God's spirit will be poured out in a mighty way on the family members of every General Conference leader and staff member.

## **Day 10 (May 10)**

### **Reaching Your City**

*But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf. – Jeremiah 29:7*

*"The importance of making our way in the great cities is still kept before me. For many years the Lord has been urging upon us this duty, and yet we see but comparatively little accomplished in our great centers of population. If we do not take up this work in a determined manner, Satan will multiply difficulties which will not be easy to surmount. We are far behind in doing the work that should have been done in these long-neglected cities. The work will now be more difficult than it would have been a few years*

*ago. But if we take up the work in the name of the Lord, barriers will be broken down, and decided victories will be ours.” – Ministry to the Cities, p. 25.*

## **Heart Challenge**

The majority of the world lives in cities. While we are to ask God to show us when to move to the countryside, we are also not to neglect the work in the cities. Billions are trapped without hope in the addictions, noise, distractions, and the lifestyle of the cities.

Pray for God to give you a burden for ministry to the cities. Maybe He is calling you to start a “center of influence” or a ministry-minded business in order to reach lost souls in the cities of the world? Or maybe He is calling you and your church to engage in a holistic outreach through various ministries to the people of your city?

Why not ask God to show you how to best minister to the people of your city or village?

## **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for the welfare of your own city. Pray that the gospel will shine bright through you and your church in your city.
- • Pray for the mayor of your city/town/village, and for other community leaders. Pray for their salvation and for God to give them wisdom for good leadership.
- • Pray for the cities that have no Adventist presence—that God will raise up laborers for the harvest.
- • Pray for the Global urban centers, Mission to the Cities and Centers of Influence located in unreached cities around the world. Pray that many will be brought to Jesus.

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- Pray for the leadership in these centers to have wisdom to fulfill their mission for the advancement of God’s Kingdom.

## **Day 11 (May 11) Testimony - Sebastien Braxton**

### **“Smelling Like an Angel”**

By Sebastien Braxton

As I knocked on the door, a small-framed, middle-aged woman opened it slightly to greet me. I began explaining that I was going door-to-door selling Christian literature. She quickly interrupted me and asked if I could come back tomorrow. She appeared emotionally disturbed. I leaned upon my own experience and replied, “Ma’am, we don’t usually come back. So, if you’re not interested, it’s perfectly fine. We have some sample

books I can offer you for about ten to twenty dollars . . .” Again, she dismissed my comment and requested I come back the next day. I acquiesced and promised to return. The door rapidly closed.

Despite my stubborn resistance to the Spirit, I returned to her home. Before I could even finish knocking, the door opened, and she invited me inside to wait in the kitchen. I was so utterly convinced that this would be a waste of time that I did not even bring all my books inside with me. I soon regretted that decision. Sitting in plain sight was a blank bank check, already signed. This meant that she was ready to purchase the books; she just needed to know the price. I began apologizing to the Spirit for my lack of faith.

Upon her return, she noticed the display I created on her countertop and said, “I will purchase every book you have if you can answer me one question.” In shock, I said, “Of course, anything!”

“Are you an angel?” she asked.

I shook my head. “No ma’am, I am not an angel.”

“Are you sure you’re not an angel?” she asked suspiciously, squinting.

“Yes, I am positive. You can ask my mother. She’ll tell you,” I said with a slight chuckle. I then asked curiously, “Why would you ask me that?”

Her response changed my entire understanding of how involved God had been in bringing us together. The woman told me that one year prior, she had a dream in which she dialogued with an angel whose face she could not see due to its brightness. When she woke up, thinking it was just a dream, she sat up and realized that the same angel was

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at the foot of her bed! The angel rapidly flew out the window, and as quickly as she could, she ran to the window to catch a glimpse of him—but to no avail.

As she pulled her head back inside the window, an overpowering smell rested in the room. The smell was pleasant but unfamiliar. She began a search for the source of the smell. She smelled every perfume, cologne, herb, essence, air freshener, any scent she could find. None of them matched. Until I showed up at her door. The woman told me, “You had the smell! I was so overwhelmed that I panicked and asked if you could come back tomorrow. I figured, if you were an angel from God, you would come back. You wouldn’t lie.”



And to think I almost did not return! I nearly missed an opportunity to be a part of a miracle of God by losing my heart for souls in the routine of service.

She went on to say, “Even right now, you still have the smell.” We prayed together and embraced, and she requested Bible studies.

Like a modern-day Cornelius experience (Acts 10), God is preparing someone right now for you. I believe God left that scent over a year before for her to confirm the heavenly authority of whoever bore it again. Thankfully, God is no respecter of persons, and He will gladly give the same experience to anyone willing to offer themselves for the salvation of others. If you are willing to submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit and make yourself available to heaven, then you will “smell like an angel” to a soul God has been preparing to receive His grace and salvation.

*Sebastien Braxton is a UX Designer, international speaker and a serial entrepreneur. He is the CEO and co-founder for Luminate, a mobile app that curates audio mediational experiences through the writings of Ellen White. He is the founder of Fiat Lux, a creative design agency that consults with faith-based organizations to leverage technology for the gospel.*

## **Heart Challenge**

When we make ourselves available to be used by God, He will orchestrate divine appointments that are not only a blessing to the person we minister to, but they also encourage us in our walk with Christ. Nothing is as thrilling as walking with Jesus and knowing He is working on our behalf as we join Him in His work.

When was the last time you prayed for God to give you divine appointments? Why not surrender your time, your fears, yourself, to Christ right now, and ask Him to use you to reach somebody for Him today?

## **Prayer Requests**

- Pray for specific divine appointments today and this weekend.
- Pray that God would give you a personal Bible study contact and take away any fear in your heart of studying with others.

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- Pray for our brothers and sisters in China, who are struggling under religious oppression.
- Pray for believers affected by flooding in Durban South Africa, and in the Philippines.
- Pray for those 7 names on your list. Pray for ways to reach out to them.

**Day 12 (May 12) Prayer Requests Friday**

- • Pray for wisdom for the church leaders at the upcoming General Conference Session in St. Louis, USA (June 5-11, 2022).
- • Pray for the Ukrainian people, and specially for church members in areas that are affected by the conflict. Pray that they will be a bright light to the hurting people around them.
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured out upon the literature ministries around the world. Pray that this will be a door way that will lead many to accept Christ Jesus.
- • Pray for the displaced Afghan Refugees.
- • Pray for God's intervention on the rising fuel and food prices, especially in countries where there is a state of emergency. Pray that God will supply the needs of His people according to His riches and glory.

### Day 13 (May 13) Prayer Requests Sabbath

- • Pray for the 7 people on your list.
- • Pray that God will prepare His church and leaders for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- Pray for our Upcoming Revelation Seminar.
- Pray for Church families and new believers.

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## Week 3: May 14-20 | Theme: The Word

### Day 14 (May 14) - Devotional Thought - Sikhu Daco

#### **“The Power of The Word”**

By Sikhu Daco

It had been a full day of teaching ministry and Jesus was exhausted. His hearers had not realized it, but the One who spoke to them that day was the Word that created all things in the beginning. The power of His words could only be unleashed in the lives of those who chose to exercise faith in the Life-Giver, however. The Commander of Heaven's host, now wearied from His labors, committed Himself to the care of His disciples to ferry Him to the other side of the lake. “And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship” (Mark 4:36).

A storm suddenly arose as the disciples crossed over, and despite their experience navigating those very waters, they found it impossible to control their situation. For all their efforts, human wisdom has reached its extremity and finally, realizing that Jesus was in the ship with them, they cried out to Him, “Lord, save us: we perish” (Matt. 8:25).

It was at Jesus' command that they set sail to the other side of the lake, yet they seemed to forget that He was even in the ship with them. They were in that storm because they had chosen to obey Christ's command but they behaved as though it was entirely up to them to ensure the fulfillment of the instruction. Having begun the journey with Christ, in obedience to His word, they now resorted to human strength to accomplish what His word had enjoined.

In response to the Word of God speaking to their lives, many have begun their Christian journey. It is all too easy to then resort to their own strength in an attempt to complete the journey. God never intended for it to be so. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col. 2:6). The power to sustain our Christian experience is the same power that transformed us in the first place and it is rooted in God's Word. The disciples would have been spared much anxiety had they remembered that if His Word commanded you, His Word will keep you.

Arising from His peaceful slumber in the midst of that great storm, Jesus declared, "Peace, be still." The wind ceased, and there was a great calm (Mark 4:39). Of course the elements obeyed His word! Had He not cast out demons (Mark 1:23-27, 39), healed the sick (Mark 1:30-34; 2:3-12; 3:1-5), and cured a leper (Mark 1:40-42) already?! Had the disciples not been "astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes" (Mark 1:22)? But they had not realized just how powerful His Word was!

When Jesus spoke, His words created reality. All that He commands in His word, He, in essence, promises to accomplish in the lives of all who exercise faith in Him. So it is said, "As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is

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to be done at His command, may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 331-333). What remains is for us to decide if we will permit His Word to do its work in our lives?

*Sikhu Daco is a panelist on the Hope Channel TV show inVerse, which discusses the Bible study guide by the same name. She has a Masters in Religion from Andrews University Theological Seminary.*

### **Heart Challenge**

As human beings we naturally believe in our own opinions and worldview before considering outside information. Pride can lead us into being unable to see and hear relevant information which has the potential to change us. But when we surrender our lives to Jesus, the Spirit will lead us to question our personal ideas, opinions, and beliefs by shining upon them the light of God's truth as revealed in His Word. One major key to spiritual growth is to let this light truly shine on us and guide our way by

spending regular quality time in the reading, study, and praying of God's Word - the Bible.

When was the last time you really took unrushed uninterrupted time to dive into God's Word and let its phenomenal truths bring light into your life?

Why not cut down on time you spend on your devices, and carve out, regular time for deeper Bible study. It doesn't matter how much you read and study. The key is to truly chew on a passage/story until its personally life-changing, and light-bringing principles are internalized, and ready to be put into practice.

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for victory over the digital distractions on your phone or computer.
- • Pray to be guarded against the dangerous influences of the occult that often streams through media.
- • Pray for our world church family to have strength by God's power to break any strongholds/addictions/distractions so we can become the mighty army God has promised.
- • Pray for wisdom how to make personal and daily family worship a priority.
- • Pray for those 7 names on your list, that these individuals would discover victory and the joy of time with Jesus.

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## **Day 15 (May 15)**

### **The Word - A Sword**

*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. – Hebrews 4:12*

*The Bible may be studied as a branch of human science would be, but its beauty, the evidence of its power to save the soul that believes, is a lesson that is never thus learned. If the practice of the Word is not brought into the life, then the sword of the Spirit has not wounded the natural heart. It has been shielded in poetic fancy. Sentimentalism has so wrapped it about that the heart has not sufficiently felt the keenness of its edge, piercing and cutting away the sinful shrines where self is worshipped. – Our High Calling, 203*

### **Heart Challenge**

The Bible is full of hope. It contains everything we need. The good news of salvation is clearly presented to the reader. But all these wonderful elements of the Word are of no use if they are not moving from our mind to our heart and into our actions. Taking hold of the promises in the Word will enable you to put into practice what is written. This process can be painful at times, but rest assured, it is for your benefit and will lead to an ever-deepening appreciation of your Friend Jesus and His Truth. Is it your desire, today, to let God's word penetrate your heart, cut out what is destroying you, and heal your life?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for God to speak clearly to you in His Word today.
- • Pray for strong convictions and a willing heart to receive the sharp sword of the Word, even if it cuts.
- • Pray for efficiency and Holy Spirit power for all those who are translating the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy into many languages.
- • Pray that God will help us each become literature evangelist and that we will share "Glow Tracts" or a word in season to those who are weary.
- • Pray for our schools and educational institutions to be true to God's Word and His mission for our young people.

### **Day 16 (May 18)**

#### **The Word – Life-giving**

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*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. – 2 Timothy 3:16*

*The life of God, which gives life to the world, is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons. By His word He stilled the sea and raised the dead; and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God as He had spoken it to all the Old Testament writers. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ. It is our only source of power. – Gospel Workers, 250*

#### **Heart Challenge**

Isn't it incredible that the Bible - God's Word - is so much more than just a collection of ancient writings? It is inspired, meaning, God was directly involved in helping the faithful authors put their God-breathed thoughts to "paper." Inculcated into these words is His life-giving, and life-changing power to revive, restore, and redeem. But it is only activated by faith.

Do you truly believe what God says in His Word? When was the last time you took God at His Word and trusted that what He promised He would do, He will do, even when your feelings tell you otherwise? Will you let God's Word revive and restore your soul, today?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for strength to have faith in God's promises and not be dragged down by your feelings of doubt or fear.
- • Pray the promises of God's Word over the 7 people on your list.
- • Pray that Jesus' love and the truths of His Word would find entrance into those countries where there is no Adventist presence.
- • Pray for believers that are experiencing great religious persecution especially in Russia, China and the Middle East Countries.
- • Pray for those who have chosen to be baptized since the conflicts started in Eastern Europe. Pray those decisions will be permanent.

### **Day 17 - May 17**

#### **The Word – A Light**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. – Psalm 119:105*

*He who receives the first ray of light sent him, and walks in it, bringing his actions into harmony with God's Word, will receive more light. He who walks in the light as it comes, not waiting to have every doubt removed, every mystery solved, will follow on to know the Lord. For him the light will shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. His path will*

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*be illuminated as he advances. God's Word will be a lamp to his feet and a light to his path. – Signs of the Times, 9/17/1902*

#### **Heart Challenge**

Do you remember that day when you gave your heart and life to Jesus? Or that time a sermon spoke to your heart? Or that time when reading a story or passage in the Bible truly convicted you?

God's Word is powerful. Creator - level powerful. Yet we seem to struggle to let it do its work in our lives. We resort to trusting in our own abilities, intelligence, convictions, instead of trusting the Bible's promises and also relying on the Divine Wordsmith behind them - the Almighty Creator God, Who is more willing than you could ever imagine to

bring to fruition the complete fulfillment of His promises in your life. Will you let Him complete this work in your life? Will you take hold of His Word anew today, believe it, and permit it to do what it says He would do? Will you allow His Word to truly be a light to your path?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for the 7 people on your list.
- • Pray for God to help you gain deeper insight from His Word that you could share with those 7 people you are praying for.
- • Pray and claim specific promises from the Bible to strengthen your prayers.
- • Pray that we as a church will study the word of God and pray like never before so that the Latter Rain will come.
- • Pray for Myanmar as clashes between junta still surges. Pray for a hedge of protection around believers and that they may remain steadfast in faith amidst the turmoil and strife.

## **Day 18 (May 18) Testimony - Israel Ramos**

### **“The Charge to Preach the Word”**

By Israel Ramos

I was a high school student literature evangelist in Maine. We typically had Fridays off as personal days, but our sister program composed of older students selling more expensive books had some people who worked on Friday to make extra money. Enjoying an opportunity to spend time with the more popular crowd, I decided to tag along. I canvassed one door, trying to prove I was worth the company, while my partner tried to sell at every other door. After a few successful hours in the field, we made our way back home. That’s when I heard the legendary sermon that changed the rest of my life.

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The late C.D. Brooks was on the radio with the surround sound of the car’s speakers turned up to full volume. The occasion for the sermon was the ordination of two ministers to the work of the gospel. The message’s inspiration was taken from 2 Timothy 4:1-4— the words of an old Paul to a young Timothy: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word.”

I had just concluded my sophomore year in high school and already felt God’s call to be a minister. Still in the process of discovering who I really was, my personality awkwardly shifted between timidity and crassness, insecurity and over confidence. Until that time, I

was not one to listen to sermons on the radio. In fact, I had only recently become a real Christian, leaving behind a life of choices that had blunted my mind and ruined my spiritual experience.

As the booming voice of the preacher began to break down that text, my mind—along with the windows in the car—seemed as though they were about to explode. “Preach the word!” was charge, followed by strong warnings against pastors that do anything else.

Two things happened from that day forward. First, I developed a passion for the Word of God like never before. Second, I committed myself to the proclamation of the same.

When that summer ended, I returned to academy for my junior year. For our required speech class, I decided to use that sermon as my inspiration. I wasn’t concerned with plagiarism at the time, and tried to recall as much of the sermon I had heard just a few months before. The only thing that I could remember was the haunting solemnity of Paul’s charge to Timothy: “Preach the word!”

In all honesty, the presentation did not make sense. It failed to take into consideration that fact that no one in the audience was on a path towards pastoral ministry. We were, after all, a bunch of high school students simply trying to fulfill a required assignment to successfully complete a course—a course which was not very popular due to its terrifying requirement to speak in public.

Besides not understanding the needs of my audience, I did not take into account my own abilities as a speaker. Inspired by Brooks’ style, I scripted a sermon full of exclamation points, envisioning myself speaking at the top of my voice to my colleagues as though I, too, was inspiring them at their ordinations. My delivery did not match my intention.

I do not recall the grade I received on my speech. I simply remember a few pieces of advice from the school principal reminding me to not fumble with my Bible, followed by these encouraging words, “God is going to use you someday to do something special for Him.”

Those words required faith. I was a struggling student in every subject and the deep passion of my heart to give my life in service to God had yet to surface into a life of commitment. As much as I tried, I could not understand the Bible for myself. For an entire

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year, the only Bible passage I studied for my devotional time in the morning was 2 Timothy 4:1-4.



Nearly fifteen years later, the same passage was read to me at my ordination service. It has been twenty-five years since that day that I preached to myself, and those pressing words from Paul still serve as an encouragement and a warning to fulfill my ministry.

*Israel Ramos is the director and coordinator of public campus ministry in the Michigan Conference and Lake Union, respectively. His wife Judy is an educator and together they have three sons with whom they enjoy sharing life.*

## **Heart Challenge**

Whether you are a pastor or not, every believer is called to share the life-transforming messages of the Bible. In whatever form we share our faith with others, in preaching, teaching, writing, singing, in acts of service, or any other creative way, it is vital that *what* we share is filled with, and faithful to, the Word of God; In alignments with its directions and God's character of love.

The Word of God is powerful. Its preaching impacts lives for eternity. Will you answer the call of Paul and 'preach the Word' through your words and actions?

## **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for boldness to preach the Word in words and actions today. Pray for more young people to be called to preach the Word.
- • Pray about any questions you have in the Bible. Ask God to help you find answers and clarity regarding those questions.
- • Pray for your local pastors. Pray that God would sustain them, protect them, and most importantly, fill them with an even more abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit
- • Pray for protection of our young people from the ever-increasing addictions to technology and screen time.
- • Pray for the 7 people on your list by name. Continue to claim God's promises.

## **Day 19 (May 19) Prayer Requests Friday**

- • Pray that we would have an "Upper Room experience" as the disciples had at Pentecost during session, and that we would be empowered to reach the entire world for Jesus as they did.
- • Pray that the special prayer times in the meetings will be deeply meaningful and helpful for all in attendance.
- • Pray for unity in every meeting based on respect for God's Word, humble prayer, the Holy Spirit's power.
- • Pray for full engagement in the mission of the church in proclaiming the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 and the fourth angel of Revelation 18.

## Day 20 (May 20) Prayer Requests Sabbath

- • Pray for God to speak to you in His Word today.
  - • Pray for God to help you be consistent this coming week in your daily devotions.
  - • Pray for that God would re-ignite fresh passion in the hearts of His people— fresh passion for His Word, for prayer, and for mission.
- 
- **Week 4: May 21-27 | Theme: Christ Our Righteousness**

## Day 21 (May 23) Devotional Thought - Frank Fournier

### “Get Up and Glow”

By Frank Fournier

Soon the “earth will be lightened” with the glorious attributes of God’s character. A multitude of reclaimed sinners will, in the power of God, “rise and shine” drawing the “forces of the gentiles” into the arms of an ever-welcoming Father. (Rev. 18:1; Isa. 60: 1- 5.)

We are told that the Holy Spirit’s influence in the last days will be so compelling that the world will be gripped by an overwhelming sense of conviction. Selfless Christians will be seen rushing from person-to-person, house-to-house, speaking words given them directly from heaven. Thousands, perhaps millions, will respond. Their lips will resonate with a new song for in all of God’s host they see no man, but Jesus only.

In a Sabbath School discussion not long ago, one of our members remarked that a carnal person wishes to be somebody. They long to be recognized for something. But all such hope is misplaced. Jesus said, “Without Me you can do nothing.” Therefore, anything we accomplish is accomplished by the power of God in us. To take the credit for what God alone can do is an insult to Him and is detrimental to us spiritually. Jesus only is our salvation; He alone is our glory, our righteousness, our all and in all.

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For a long time, God has been poised to manifest Himself, His love, His wisdom, and power to a dying world, if only His people afforded Him a conduit through which He could work! Instead, by self-sufficiency, we “have limited the Holy one of Israel” (Ps.

78:41). Were we in touch with reality, we would not for a moment feel so “rich and increased with good, in need of nothing” (Rev. 3:17).

“I saw,” says the prophet, “that the strength of the children of God is in their humility. When they are little in their own eyes, Jesus will be to them their strength and their righteousness and God will prosper their labors” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 307).

“To this man will I look,” says God, “even to him that is poor (in his own eyes), and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word” (Isa. 66:2b).

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isa. 57:15).

According to Ellen White, “The human agent who works most effectually has the greatest sense of his own weakness and his unworthiness, and he casts his helpless soul upon Christ. This is the character that God calls contrite. . . Here is our source of power” (*1888 Material*, p. 1458).

Must we wait until “every earthly support is cut off”? (*Desires of Ages*, p. 121) Do we need to be reduced to abject poverty before we feel our need of God’s helping hand? Are we waiting for the final persecution to humble our hearts? Do we need to hear the words “Behold the Bridegroom cometh” before we rise to the occasion?

Jesus is coming soon. Arouse, people of God!

Honoring God before the world will not get easier. Our hearts will never be more receptive to Christ’s righteousness than they are now. We must now humble our hearts based on our need and claim God’s power based on His promises.

God’s command to us today is:

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come,  
The glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.  
For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,  
Gross darkness the people,  
But the Lord shall arise upon thee,  
His glory shall be seen upon thee. . .”

(And, as a result)

“The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee,  
And the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto . . . the brightness of thy rising.” Isaiah 60:1-5 (emphasis supplied)

*Frank Fournier is the pastor for Eden Valley Church at Eden Valley Institute in Loveland, Colorado.*

## **Heart Challenge**

Humility is the key to success in the Christian life, for as we recognize our great need, we throw ourselves upon the One who has all the righteousness we need, and He will give us victory. Don't you desire victory over self, sin, and power in soul-winning? Don't you desire to receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on a daily basis? Don't you wish for Jesus to truly live in and through you, revealing His character of love, self-sacrifice and grace to all you come in contact with? What hinders you today in living under the righteousness of Christ? Is there self-righteousness in your life? What fears might you be holding on to when it comes to boldly and kindly sharing His love and truth with the people in your sphere of influence?

Be of good courage, Jesus will help you, if you reach out in your great need (John 6:37). He is more than willing to shine His glory through your life, starting today. Why not ask for Him to be glorified in your life, right now?

## **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for a clearer understanding among believers of "righteousness by faith."
- • Pray for humility of heart and the gift of surrender.
- • Pray for courage to share God's Word with people around you through offering Bible studies, and through teaching and preaching.
- • Pray for boldness in sharing God's love and truth through your unique gifts.
- • Pray that as we recognize the nearness of Jesus coming we would all take time to seek Him with all our hearts and dig deeply in His Word.

## **Day 22 (May 22)**

### **The Science of All Sciences**

*For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. – Colossians 1:19-20*

*The science of redemption is the science of all sciences; the science that is the study of the angels and of all the intelligences of the unfallen worlds; the science that engages the attention of our Lord and Saviour; the science that enters into the purpose brooded in the mind of the Infinite—"kept in silence through times eternal" (Romans 16:25, R.V.); the science that will be the study of God's redeemed throughout endless ages. This is*

*the highest study in which it is possible for man to engage. As no other study can, it will quicken the mind and uplift the soul. – Education, 126*

## **Heart Challenge**

Do you have a degree? Did you go to school? Have you learned a skill? All these things are good, but nothing can compare to the study of the science of salvation. It is easy to say, 'Oh, I know John 3:16' and claim that you understand salvation. And while, yes, salvation can be outlined in simple terms, yet there is a depth in its study, that requires a deeper look. Diving into this study, thinking through the things that Jesus accomplished through His life, death, and resurrection, and appreciating how it relates to the great controversy theme, the sanctuary, the judgment, and most importantly, to our everyday lives; all this will help you to fall in love with Jesus increasingly more as you go deeper and deeper.

Will you choose today to engage in this science of all sciences? Will you set aside time for the most important study of all eternity, how to win souls for God's Kingdom?

## **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for a deeper appreciation of the work of salvation which Jesus accomplished for you.
- • Pray for a clearer understanding of what truly happened at the cross.
- • Pray for the multitudes who do not understand the wonderful truth of Christ Our Righteousness and the gospel of salvation that is all from Him, not of our human works.
- • Pray for your 7 names on your list. Pray for an opportunity to interact with them and invite them to church or your home or a meeting.

## **Day 23 (May 23)**

### **What is Righteousness?**

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. – Matthew 5:6*

- • Pray for your immediate and extended family. Pray for their salvation and for opportunities to share with them your faith, God's word, and the love of Christ.
- • Pray for those who are struggling with addictions to find victory.

*Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God, and 'God is love.' 1 John 4:16. It is conformity to the law of God, for 'all Thy commandments are righteousness' (Psalm 119:172), and 'love is the fulfilling of the law' (Romans 13:10). Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him. – Thoughts from The Mount of Blessing, p. 18*

## **Heart Challenge**

Do you hunger and thirst for Christ's righteousness?

His life of perfectly selfless love and His substitutional death provides you with a twofold gift of justifying grace: 1.) His imputed righteousness, which is the promise that you are covered by His perfect life through faith in that promise. 2.) His imparted righteousness, which is the promise that He will transform you from a being of selfishness, into a being that reflects the selfless love of Jesus, through a living faith in that very promise.

This twofold gift will fulfill you; it will truly satisfy you; it will save you! This gift is given to you in Jesus. Freely. Why not accept it today and start living a happy and Jesus-filled life in the awareness of this amazing reality of God's redemptive love?

## **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray that God would help you stop believing the lies of Satan that make you think you are not worthy of His love.
- • Pray and ask God to impute and impart His righteousness to you.
- • Pray for all the logistical details at the General Conference session to go smoothly.
- • Pray for those in the 10/40 window who have never heard this wonderful truth and have a distorted concept of God's love and character.

## **Day 24 (May 24)**

### **The Matchless Charms of Jesus**

*Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith. – Philippians 3:8-9*

*As the student of the Bible beholds the Redeemer, there is awakened in the soul the mysterious power of faith, adoration, and love. Upon the vision of Christ the gaze is fixed, and the beholder grows into the likeness of that which he adores. – Education, 192.*

*You should search the Bible; for it tells you of Jesus. As you read the Bible, you will see the matchless charms of Jesus. You will fall in love with the Man of Calvary. – LS, 293*

## **Heart Challenge**

Does your heart long to understand the “matchless charms of Jesus” – to know and love Jesus above all? Are you wondering how to have such a relationship with Him? Have courage! Fix your gaze upon Him. Prayerfully study the scenes of His life and death. Realize the profound gift of His sacrifice and the reality that He did this for you, personally. Reflect on the fact that He loves you, and values you even more than His own eternal life. Believe that His forgiveness was provided for *you*, and His righteousness is enough. Meditate upon these things, and let the matchless charms of Jesus melt your heart today.

## **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray as you study God’s Word that His Spirit would reveal to your heart the matchless charms of Jesus and take us ever deeper into the joy of knowing Jesus personally.
- • Pray that God would reveal any idols in your life that might distract you from seeing the beauty of Jesus clearly.
- • Pray for God to help share His love with those around you in practical and specific ways.
- • Pray that God will bring to the forefront godly, teachable and humble leaders for the future; leaders that will provide Christ-centered leadership as His church fulfills its heaven-born mandate to the world.

## **Day 25 (May 25) Testimony - Andy Im**

### **“He Who Has Begun a Good Work In You ...”**

By Andy Im

When I decided to give my life to Christ while attending college, my experience certainly wasn’t what I was anticipating. Instead of joy and peace that others spoke about, my day- to-day life was filled with anxiety and feelings of intense guilt.

I felt like I was never good enough and was constantly hitting the “reset” button after every perceived or apparent failure. I tried so hard to be perfect in my diet, exercise, devotional life, and daily habits.

But I never measured up to what I thought were the essential ingredients to being an authentic Seventh-day Adventist Christian. Eventually I came to the conclusion that either I stick with Christianity and go crazy from guilt, or leave all that behind altogether to enjoy the pleasures of the world.

I chose the latter, and said to myself, “If I’m going to enjoy the world and be lost, I might as well enjoy it all the way.” I went from one extreme to the other and fully immersed myself in the enticements of the world. I experienced the artificially induced “high” in many forms. But, it wasn’t long before I realized that the world was a dead-end street and I found myself once again in the pit of despair.

One late night, I began experiencing extraordinary feelings of anxiety after ingesting a particular substance. The experience was abhorrent and terrifying, but there was absolutely no way to escape the predicament I found myself in.

I was desperate.

It was then that I looked across my bedroom and saw the Bible that my mother had left for me. I picked it up and turned to the book of Psalms and began to read.

Moments later, I began experiencing something truly remarkable. While reading the Psalms, the anxiety began to fade away and I found myself taking in and comprehending what I was reading.

“There is power in the word,” I thought to myself. How a drug-induced anxiety could vanish by reading Scripture was about as close to a miracle as I had ever experienced.

What really struck me that night when reading the Psalms was the portrayal of God as Someone who was for me—He was on my side! God wasn’t vindictive, looking to nail me with wrongdoing. I caught a glimpse of Someone who pities His children in the same way a father pities his child (Ps. 103:13). I discovered that God wasn’t out to get me, and that there was no circumstance or predicament that God couldn’t rescue me from (Ps. 139:1- 10).

That night was the first of many, where I took the time to discover and read about who God really was. That makes all the difference in the world. How one relates to and experiences God is significantly determined by what we know Him to be.

But that’s not the only thing that especially impacts one’s experience as a Christian. I also discovered the precious teaching of the salvation that comes about through one’s faith and trust in His work to accomplish what we are unable to do for ourselves—regardless of present and future circumstances, as bleak as they may be.



The Bible informs us that the process of salvation is God's work within us. It's His responsibility to make the impossible, possible, so long as we give Him the permission to work in us to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:12,13).

The experience of salvation is also a process that takes time to iron out foibles, the dissonance we sometimes feel between what we know to be ideal versus our present predicaments and experiences.

Wherever you are in your experience, no matter how bleak the outlook, it's important to know by faith—not feelings—that God has your back. That He will complete the work that He has started.

In the words of Scripture we can, "[Be] 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).

Jesus is inviting you today to put your salvation completely into His hands. You're in good hands when you do that. Trust me.

*Andy Im serves as director of communications and Religious Liberty for the Michigan Conference. He enjoys photography, fishing, and playing pickle ball in his spare time. Andy is happily married to Laura, and they have two beautiful daughters—Olivia and Karis.*

### **Heart Challenge**

Isn't it an encouragement to know that God has your back? That He is for you, not against you? That He has pledged Himself to not only start the good work, but to finish it too? All He needs from us is our consent and obedient surrender, as He works out in us His salvation.

Will you give Him full access to your heart and life today? Will you allow Him to not just be your Savior, but your Lord, fully in control of every area of your life? Will you trust His righteousness, and that He knows best how to finish the good work He has begun in you?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray that God would silence the lies of the enemy and show you that He is truly for you and not against you.
- • Pray that you would trust His righteousness to save you, and that all self-righteousness would be renounced.
- • Pray for an increased emphasis on small group outreach in your local church so that all members are participating in personal witnessing.

- • Pray that you would have strength to follow God's health principles, not as a rigid standard, but to enable your mind and heart to be fully in tune with the Holy Spirit.
- • Pray for your 7 names. Pray how to take active steps to reach out to them.

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## Day 26 (May 26) Prayer Requests Friday

- • Pray for broken families and relationships in your life.
- • Ask God to show you somebody at church this week, that you can befriend that you've never reached out to before.
- • Pray for church members throughout the Middle East, especially in Iran and Israel.
- • Pray for those who are in prison both physically and spiritually. Pray that the truths of God's Word would set them free.

## Day 27 (May 29) Prayer Requests Sabbath

- • Pray for the political leaders in your city, province, and nation, by name if possible.
- • Pray for the 30% of our church members (this is about 13,000 Ukrainian Adventist) who are losing their homes or being forced to abandon them.
- • Pray for our church members in other countries who have opened their homes to refugees.
- • Pray for God's will to be accomplished in your life today. Pray for divine appointments.
- • Pray God's Word over your 7 names. Reach out and let them know you are praying. Ask them what you can pray for in their life.

## **Week 5: May 28 - June 3 | Theme: The Holy Spirit**

### Day 28 (May 28) Devotional Thought - Ron Clouzet

#### **"The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit"**

By Ron Clouzet

On the Day of Pentecost of the year AD 31, the Holy Spirit was poured out in great measure upon the emerging New Testament church. The results? Jesus' 120 disciples who were praying in the Upper Room were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1, 4), people who once avoided witnessing for Jesus (Matt. 26:69-75)

became bold (Acts 2:14-21; 4:7- 13), and 3,000 Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem became the first group of Christians in history—all in one day (Acts 2:38-41).

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That story is found in Acts 2, but Acts 2 would have never happened without Acts 1. Two things we should notice from Acts 1. The disciples were united, praying for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:13-14), and they were reviewing the self-sacrificing ministry of Jesus on their behalf (see *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 35-38). It only took 10 days to see what they had been too blind to see before: the overwhelming love of God.

Two premises without which the church cannot expect the outpouring of God's Spirit with power to finish the work in the world are Calvary and Community. These are basic conditions for the outpouring of God's love in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

When a church determines to focus on the love and ministry of Jesus on their behalf (Calvary) and when they press together to seek the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Community) that church will experience the mighty power of God on their behalf.

“After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were so filled with love for Him and for those for whom He died, that hearts were melted by the words they spoke and the prayers they offered. They spoke in the power of the Spirit; and under the influence of that power, thousands were converted” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 22).

How can we melt hearts? We can't. But Jesus can. And when we are full of Jesus (see Eph. 3:14-19), His love melts hearts through us. This powerful work of the Spirit will happen again in the church. “These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. Christ is again to be revealed in His fulness by the Holy Spirit's power” (*Christ's Object Lessons*, 121).

Note that the power of God is not sheer or mere power, it is the profound and all-encompassing love of Christ for you and me. Understanding that and receiving that in the heart turns into the mighty power of the Spirit for the finishing of the work. It happened two thousand years ago. It will happen again. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

*Ron E. M. Clouzet, DMin, is a former division ministerial secretary and currently pastors the East Ridge Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tennessee.*

### **Heart Challenge**

Is it your desire to have an Acts 1 experience of community and Calvary in order to be ready for the Acts 2 experience of the Latter Rain? Do you long for a heart filled with the

love of God, and for a life that can be used as channel of God's love to those around you?

The good news is, that Jesus is more than happy to lead you, your family, and your church community into such a reality. Why not spend some time in prayer right now, asking Jesus for a fresh and clearer revelation of Calvary, so that the way can be paved for the outpouring of the Spirit upon you and the church?

## Prayer Requests

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- • Ask God to clear your heart from distracting thoughts and intrusive emotions.
- • Pray for Jesus to reveal Himself to you through the study of the cross.
- • Ask for the Holy Spirit to fill you every day, to prepare you to be a vessel ready for the outpouring of the latter rain.
- • Pray that God would help us as a people know what it means to be a community in prayer, and how to create a chain of prayer around the world.

## Day 29 (May 29)

### The Divine Helper

*Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. – John 16:7*

*The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. . . . Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, . . . It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church. Of the Spirit Jesus said, 'He shall glorify Me.' – The Desire of Ages, p. 671*

### Heart Challenge

Have you taken time to really contemplate and appreciate the incredible gift of the Holy Spirit? He is part of the Heavenly Trio, the Godhead, and He was sent to you as a gift from Jesus. He speaks, leads, convicts, helps, comforts, transforms and empowers you on your heavenward journey. He is helping you become more like our loving Savior.

Have you ever specifically invited the Holy Spirit into your life? Have you personally experienced Him “making effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer”?

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Why not start earnestly pleading for a daily baptism of the Holy Spirit? Invite Jesus to live in and work through you, via His Spirit, and give Him access to every area of your life.

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray that God will help you better understand the biblical teaching of the Godhead and the baptism of the Holy Spirit as well as a deeper understanding of the personal nature of the Holy Spirit’s work.
- • Pray for Holy Spirit power to achieve victory over hereditary and cultivated tendencies to sin.
- • Pray that you would be a faithful steward of your time and your tithe. Even though times are difficult the Bible tells us that those who honor God, He will honor (1 Sam. 2:30).
- • Pray for a sweet spirit of unity among the General Conference session delegates, that will transcend any differences of opinion. Pray that all delegates will humbly accept any outcomes, even if they may not be in accordance with personal desires.
- • Pray the prayer of Jesus in John 17 for all of us to be one in unity. For fulfilled marriages, harmonious families and churches, all under the will of God.

## **Day 30 (May 30)**

### **A Saving Connection**

*And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. – John 16:8-11*

*The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. – Acts of the Apostles, p. 49*

### **Heart Challenge**

Part of the Holy Spirit's work is to convict of sin, righteousness, and judgment. These three elements of His "convicting work" are represented in the Sanctuary and its services.

In the courtyard the sacrifice for sin took place (pointing to Jesus on the Cross and His imputed righteousness); in the Holy Place the three elements of experiencing the imparted righteousness of Christ were revealed—in the Table of Showbread (Bible study),

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the Altar of Incense (Prayer), and the Candlestick (Spirit-filled witnessing). All three elements were exemplified in the life of Christ as a model for us today; And in the Most Holy Place we are reminded of the importance and reality of the judgment as the High Priest only entered on the Day of Atonement (pointing to Jesus engaging in the investigative judgment on your behalf).

In other words: The Holy Spirit's work is to lead you into a salvation experience through faith in everything that Jesus is, has done, and is now doing for you.

Do you understand the personal significance of the beautiful work of the Holy Spirit? Will you joyfully embrace His work and let Him lead you to Jesus, and also make you like Jesus in character as we live through the time of the judgment?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of the 7 names on your list.
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in any area in your own life that needs spiritual healing.
- • Pray that the Holy Spirit would help you love and obey God and His Word.
- • Pray that in our eagerness to find creative ways to witness to others, we won't lose our dependence on Christ, His Word, His righteousness, His sanctuary service, and His saving power in the great controversy.
- • Pray for the weak and vulnerable around you, especially for orphans and widows, and those enslaved.

## **Day 31 (May 31)**

### **A Reflection of Jesus' Character**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. – Galatians 5:22-23*

*As you receive the Spirit of Christ—the Spirit of unselfish love and labor for others—you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely. . . . This fruit can never perish, but will produce after its kind a harvest unto eternal life. – Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 67-68*

### **Heart Challenge**

The Spirit leads us to Jesus. And as we abide in Jesus through a daily filling of the Holy Spirit, He will develop in us a character that reflects each day a little more the selfless,

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self-sacrificial, loving character of our Savior. It is a transformational process of a lifetime. Just like a mango does not appear an hour after the seed has been planted but takes its time to grow into a tree that eventually bears fruit, so also the work of sanctification is a process that takes time. But rest assured that through abiding in Christ and faithfulness to His Word every aspect of the fruit of the Spirit will become evident in your life, not one will be missing!

Have you let the Holy Spirit grow His fruit in you? Are there some ways you have been resisting the growth of the fruit of the Spirit in your life? Is it your desire to reflect Jesus more and more until all that people see is His character of love in you?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for God to develop in you the fruit of the Spirit – every aspect of it.
- • Pray that God would show you if there are specific areas in your life where you

have resisted the Spirit’s work.

- • Pray for forgiveness if you have grieved the Spirit.
- • Pray for the thousands of ethnic groups around the world, that make up 69% of earth’s population, that have not yet had a clear presentation of Jesus. Pray for new innovative ways to reach them.
- • Pray for Mission to the Cities initiatives around the world. Examples of some special projects underway are Calcutta, India, Tokyo, and Japan where our work faces major challenges. Pray for the teams who are working diligently in these locations.

**Day 32 (June 1) Testimony - Don MacLafferty**

## **“When the Holy Spirit Overrides”**

By Don MacLafferty

A woman shyly approached my wife April and me at the end of a revival in a small church in Alberta, Canada. “Would you come and call for a revival in my church?” she asked. “We desperately need a revival!”

“Have the pastor of your church call me, and if God wants us to come to your church, we will come,” I assured her. Months went by. Nothing. We prayed for her church.

One day, the pastor called and invited me to come and talk to his leaders. I drove through the snow, praying as I traveled. I walked into the church and shivered as I continued down a dark hallway and finally found a side room with a small circle of discouraged leaders, waiting to talk.

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After a short prayer, I was invited to share. I told what we had seen God do in other churches and schools. I joyfully shared about the power of God to call all to repentance, forgiveness, and transformed lives. The group listened in absolute silence. Too much silence.

“Please tell me about your church,” I invited.

“Well...” began one, “a revival week would never work here!” Other voices chimed in: “We are way too busy here to come out more than a night or two.” “We are completely fragmented by culture and the countries from which we came. We do not come together for anything.” Finally, another leader summed it up: “Revival won’t happen here.”

I sucked in my breath, said a prayer in my mind, and responded, “God can do anything. Nothing is impossible with God.” The leaders looked at the floor, thanked me for coming, and walked me to the door.

But God moved on the hearts of one or two leaders there. They began to pray. They prayed and prayed. God listened. I received an invitation to come and call for revival, and, listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit, April and I went!

We requested that they prayerfully gather as many as possible prior to the revival to pray and be trained to be small group leaders. They agreed. We came on the appointed night and walked into the spacious church, hoping for thirty or forty prayer partners. One person was working feverishly to set up for the meeting. Eventually, eight or nine people



showed up. Many of them were late. They said it really wasn't the best night to come. We prayed with them, equipped them, and left the church very concerned.

God impressed us to come and pray and train the people a second time. The church promised to find more people. On the appointed night for training, we arrived with much hope and expectation. Less showed up than the first time. But we got on our knees and prayed and claimed God's promises.

One little boy, I will call him Dex, was sitting next to his mother in our circle of prayer. He waved his hand to get my attention. "Can I be a small group leader?" he blurted out. He was young, very young, yet he had more passion for revival than all the adults put together.

"Yes, you can!" I assured him. "Team up with your mom. You can work together." His grin was bigger than the moon. His mother's eyes were bright and shiny with tears. God whispered to my heart, "A little child will lead them."

The first night of revival came. Dex and his mom sat in the front with a circle of chairs, while I called for revival. They led their little group in the Word and in prayer. The Holy Spirit was present.

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"Less will come tomorrow night" one attendee predicted, as he left that first meeting. But we pressed forward. Every day, a few of us prayed for every member in that church, whether they came to church anymore or not. We asked God to touch the hearts of each person with the love and power of the Holy Spirit. We asked God to do what only He could do.

And every night, more people came, not two or three, but many. Young and old came. People came from work in their work clothes. People came who had not come to church in a long time. As the Holy Spirit moved on hearts, people started walking across the room. They reached out to people they had never talked with and sat down to eat a meal together before the meetings. People who were bitter towards each other confessed and asked for forgiveness. People with hard hearts had their hearts broken open to receive the love of God, some for the first time.

The Holy Spirit was working! God was lighting up the darkness, to gather those who were scattered to be a family of God once again. That's what the Holy Spirit does!

*Don MacLafferty is founder/president of In Discipleship. God has moved on Don and his wife April's heart to call young and old to a daily revival with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. They mobilize churches and schools to partner in equipping parents to disciple their children and prepare them for mission.*

**Heart Challenge**

Prayer and revival go hand in hand. Today's testimony has made that abundantly clear. How are things in your church? Is there a lack of revival? Could it be because there is a lack of earnest prayer? Is God maybe calling you to start praying for revival in your congregation? Why not find a prayer partner in your church, and ask God to guide you as you pray for individuals, circumstances, and overall revival for your local church?

Just imagine what will happen when we let the Holy Spirit work in our midst!

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for revival for your church and for your pastor(s) and elder(s) to be filled with the Spirit.
- • Pray that God give you a prayer partner, or even multiple prayer partners to pray for revival.
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on all division, union, conference and local church leaders, as well as on supporting ministries or leadership.
- • Pray that you would respond however the Holy Spirit leads, even if that means stepping out in faith, maybe even to cross a "Jordan River."
- • Claim the promises of Ezekiel 36:25-27 and Ezekiel 37 and watch God bring true revival. Spiritually dead people and churches can live by the Holy Spirit!
- • Pray for the 7 names on your prayer list.

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### **Day 33 (June 2) Prayer Requests Friday**

- • Pray for an extra measure of the Holy Spirit to be poured out on your life this Sabbath.
- • Pray for those who are alone, or still struggling under lockdowns, like in Chinese cities. Pray that believers would sense Jesus' nearness no matter their circumstances.
- • Pray for an unreached people group that God might be placing on your heart. Pray for ways you could adopt that group and for ways that you can reach out to them in some practical way.
- • Pray that the appeal "Jesus is Coming! Get Involved!" will take urgent priority in each of our daily lives.
- • Pray for our media ministries around the world, Hope Channel, 3ABN, and many others, that they will continue to spread God's truth far and wide.

### **Day 34 (June 3) Prayer Requests Sabbath**

- • Pray for the General Conference Session in St. Louis, USA which begins tomorrow. Pray for safety in travel as well as heart preparation for the delegates
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit's special blessing upon the meetings and decisions that will be made.

- • Pray for the session planning team and all the logistics to come together smoothly for those delegates who are attending virtually.
- • Pray for the onsite prayer room, that many will come to pray.
- • Pray for the General Conference leaders to have Holy Spirit wisdom in how to advance the mission of God's church and which leaders to choose for the future.

## **Week 6: June 4-9 | Theme: The Three Angels' Messages**

### Day 35 (June 4) - Devotional Thought - Mark Finley

#### **“End Time Prayer”**

By Mark Finley

Although prayer has been at the heart of the Christian church for centuries, it is doubly important in this crisis hour of earth's history. Satan has unleashed demonic spirits to bring deception, disaster, and death to our planet. God will not be caught by surprise. He

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will pour out His Spirit in latter rain power on His praying church. The “loud cry” of Revelation's third angel will sound from one end of the earth to the other.

The apostle John states, “After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven with great authority and the earth was illuminated with his glory.” (Rev. 18:1)

The angel descends from the glorious presence of God in the throne room of the universe with the commission to warn the inhabitants of the earth of what is coming. The text says that the angel comes with “great authority.” The New Testament Greek word for authority is “Exousia.” Jesus uses this word in the gospel of Matthew in harmony with the sending out of His disciples. In Matthew 10:1, Jesus gives His disciples “authority” over the principalities and powers of hell. He sends them out with the divine power to be victorious in the battle between good and evil. In Matthew 28:18, He once again sends them out but this time with “all authority in heaven and earth to go therefore and make disciples of all nations.”

When the disciples left their prayer session in the upper room at Pentecost, they went forth with the authority of the living Christ. In a few short years, the disciples proclaimed the gospel to the then known world (Col. 1:23).

At the end of time the Holy Spirit will be poured out on a praying people in unprecedented power. The gospel will rapidly be spread to the ends of the earth.

Thousands will be converted in a day. God's grace and truth will impact the entire planet.

The devil is not going to surrender without a major fight. We will soon enter the battle of the ages between good and evil. Paul's counsel to the Ephesians speaks to us with increasing relevance today. "Finally, brethren be strong in the Lord and the power of His might...For we do not battle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Eph. 6: 6-10)

We are in a real battle between good and evil. What is Paul's counsel? "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

In this battle Jesus is our strength in weakness. Jesus is our light in darkness. Jesus is our victory in temptation. Jesus is our hope in despair. Jesus is our mighty conqueror. The apostle Paul reminds us that "... the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down of strongholds." (2 Corinthians 10:4)

In Christ, the devil is a defeated foe. Whatever attacks you face, whatever temptations the evil one throws at you, whatever challenges you are confronted with, whatever difficulties you experience, you can face Satan in the Name of Jesus. He has never lost a battle with the devil yet. He is the Mighty Conqueror pulling down the strongholds of hell, triumphing over the powers of evil and defeating the enemy in our behalf. Through prayer there is power in Jesus to defeat the devil every time.

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*Mark Finley is a well-known international evangelist, author and assistant to the president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

### **Heart Challenge**

If there has ever been a time when God's people need to engage in much prayer, it is now. We are living in the last days and faced with the final events. Satan very much desires to destroy the church and its members. His greatest fear is that believers will be thoroughly connected to Jesus and glorify Him through a life of love, truth, and service.

Whatever attacks from Satan you might be facing, you can trust in Jesus to come through for you.

Do you long for that victorious end-time faith that will stand no matter the test? Why not spend some extra quality time in prayer with Jesus today, drinking deep from the Fountain of eternal life, love and truth, and being equipped for service to Him in these last days?

### **Prayer Requests**

- • Pray for God to develop in you an end time faith that works through love.
- • Pray for spiritual fortitude, through a strong connection with Jesus, to resist and endure the devil's attacks and temptations.
- • Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide in the election of leadership that will humbly honor His Word and unselfishly advance the mission of the church.

## Day 36 - June 5

### The First Angel

*Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water." – Revelation 14:6-7*

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*The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. – Lift Him Up, p.51*

### Heart Challenge

Seventh-day Adventists have the unique, prophetic calling to proclaim in words and actions the Three Angels' Messages to the entire world in preparation of the Second Coming of Jesus. The foundation of the Three Angels' Message is the everlasting gospel. The good news that Jesus *is* your Salvation. By receiving Him with living faith, you receive cleansing of, and victory over sin, and life eternal.

The first angel's message can be summarized like this: God is Your Creator. That's why you are loved and desired by Him and have no need to worship self or any form of idol. As His creation and in response to His love, you are enabled to reflect His loving character, especially now as we are living in the days of the judgment.

Will you take hold of your end-time identity in Jesus and let Him live out His life within you? Do you trust that this intimate relationship with Jesus can give you confidence in the judgment?

### Prayer Requests

- • Pray for God to be glorified in your life as your Creator and Redeemer.
- • Pray for a clearer understanding of your end-time identity in Jesus.

- • Pray that God help you know in Whom you can safely place your confidence in this time of judgment.
- • Pray for our brothers and sisters who are living in areas of governmental conflict and religious suppression.
- • Pray about how you can support believers in this part of the world.

## Day 37 (June 6)

### The Second Angel

*Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality."*  
– Revelation 14:8

*God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and "receive not of her plagues."* – Maranatha, p. 171

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### Heart Challenge

The second angel's message is short but clear: This world with all its broken and false belief systems, institutions, and movements, is corrupted, unreliable, and fallen. The only response to this cutting truth is to hide your trust in the Solid Rock, our Creator and Redeemer of all mankind – Jesus. And while Babylon is indeed fallen, there are many people in Babylon who have realized this reality and are true seekers who are waiting for the call of truth, so they can come out.

You might have come out of Babylon already, but has Babylon come out of you? Or are there still areas in your life where you put your trust in the broken systems of this world? Why not surrender all today? Why not take things a step further and join Jesus in calling people out of this sinking ship?

### Prayer Requests

- • Pray for a deeper understanding of the Three Angels' Messages.
- • Pray for God to take anything "Babylonian" out of your heart, and to give you courage to call people out of spiritual confusion.
- • Pray for the General Conference Youth Ministries, and youth ministries in your local church to be used in bringing our children back to Jesus.
- • Pray for some of the most difficult and unentered areas of the world. Pray for God's Spirit to break the strongholds by His mighty power and miracles.
- • Pray earnestly for your 7 names. Don't give up!

## Day 38 (June 7)

### The Third Angel

*And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name." Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. – Revelation 14:9-12*

*"God bids you with one hand, faith, take hold of His mighty arm, and with the other hand, love, reach perishing souls. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Follow Him. Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Walk even as He walked. This is the will of God, even*

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*your sanctification. The work you have to perform is to do the will of Him who sustains your life for His glory. If you labor for yourselves, it can profit you nothing. To labor for others' good, to be less self-caring and more in earnest to devote all to God, will be acceptable to Him and be returned by His rich grace." – Testimonies, Vol. 2, p. 170*

### Heart Challenge

Satan, the originator of all death, misery, selfishness, pain, sin, and all who embrace His falsehoods will be destroyed in the final judgment, in order for justice and love to be restored to the universe. Only those who put their trust in the loving Savior Jesus Christ will be eternally saved and transformed into a new person who reflects the selfless love of God. Soon there will be no more opportunity to win a lost soul for Jesus.

Is it your desire today, to do all that is within your ability to reach this lost world with the love of God, and the message of repentance, salvation, and judgment? Will you shine as Christ's representative in a dark world? Will you stand, live, speak, care, bless, love, and embrace your prophetic identity as a Seventh-day Adventist? And if you are not yet a Seventh-day Adventist, is it your desire to join God's end-time movement, follow God's Word, be baptized, and engage in Jesus' special mission for you?

### Prayer Requests

- Pray for understanding of the Third Angels' Message.

- • Pray for strength to obey God's Word however He leads.
- • Pray for a heart for mission and ministry.
- • Pray that Jesus will increase your faith in Him and for Him to shine through you.
- • Pray earnestly for your 7 names, as well as for your unsaved neighbors who live nearby.

## Day 39 (June 8) Testimony - Dan Serns

### **“The Everlasting Gospel Changed Bill’s Life!”**

By Dan Serns

Shortly after moving to a new neighborhood, my wife and I discovered that it got pretty loud at night. We complained about our neighbors for a while before deciding that we should be praying for them. We didn't even know their names, but we made a prayer list anyway.

We prayed for “the-big-boat neighbors,” who had a massive boat parked in their driveway. We prayed for “the cussing neighbors,” who cussed more than the rest. We prayed for “the man with two dogs,” who always came by our house every evening, yelling at his dogs, who were pulling him along faster than he wanted to go.

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When you pray to Jesus consistently for people for a few weeks, He puts a desire in your heart to do something else to help them. We talked it over and decided to start a Bible- study group in our home on Tuesday evenings. We personally invited the people on our prayer list. We also handed out invitations to the rest of the homes in the neighborhood. And we invited people from our church family to join us.

On the first night, we had six visitors in our home: five from the church and “the man with two dogs.” We learned his name was Bill and he was 65 and about to retire. Bill didn't say much during that first hour together, and when it was his turn to read the Bible, he said “Pass.” At the end, he thanked us and the next week he came back. He came back the week after that as well, and the third week no one came except Bill.

Since no one else was in attendance, he began to ask us questions. His first question was, “In our Bible study guides there are often two numbers with two dots between them. What is that mean?” It was a great opportunity to help Bill learn how to read and use the Bible. He was very grateful.



The fourth week everyone came back, including Bill. The study was about the everlasting gospel from Revelation 14. We read how we are all sinners and deserving of death, but Jesus came to live and die and pay for our sins. We shared how when we confess our sins and put our trust in Him, we receive eternal life. Then we shared how Jesus gives us victory over our struggles and how He's preparing an incredible future for each one of us.

At the end of the study, I invited each person (if they were willing) to say, "Jesus, I want You to be in charge of every part of my life." That night Bill invited Jesus to be His Savior and Lord. I was so excited! I could just imagine Jesus up in heaven saying to the angel Gabriel, "Start a new mansion! Someone else has accepted Me, and I am giving him a sense of peace that he's never experienced before. I'll transform him, and someday I'll bring him home to My house where he will live forever with me."

A few weeks later we learned that Bill had died of a heart attack while out spending time with his grandson. Bill's wife asked us to conduct his funeral. As we were preparing for this sad and unexpected funeral service, his wife Sharon told us, "Bill loved the Bible study at your home each week. He never owned a Bible before you started studies with him. But it changed his life."

Bill's life story is over, but I believe he will be among the first to rise in the clouds to meet Jesus when He returns. And we look forward with that hope!

The same Jesus that transformed Bill's life can transform anyone! Our great news, also known as the "everlasting gospel" (Rev. 14:6), will be proclaimed to the whole world before Jesus returns (Matt. 24:14). Let's be bold with sharing this good news while we still have opportunity. Let's not keep hiding behind closed doors or share a watered-down gospel that fails to lead people to the foot of the cross. This beautiful gospel of the three

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angels' messages has power to transform our entire lives. Let's share it! Jesus is coming soon!

*Dan Serns is president of the Central California Conference.*

### **Heart Challenge**

Isn't it amazing to see what is possible when we start praying for people and then ministering to them as God leads? You never know, you might be somebody's last chance to hear about Jesus. Why not ask God right now to show you people you can pray for and minister to in your own neighborhood. Ask for the ability to share the truths of the Three Angels' Messages with Holy Spirit effectiveness. If you pray these prayers in sincerity, amazing divine appointments will happen!

As you prayed for the 7 names on your list, we want to encourage you to keep praying and to keep reaching out to them. Minister to them. Seek for ways to serve them and love them like Jesus. God is able and willing to move in the lives of these individuals, and as you continue to pray, it makes a difference in the unseen world. Someday, if not now, you will see the answers to your prayers.

### Prayer Requests

- • Pray for those coming into positions of new leadership, that the Holy Spirit would equip them for the task ahead of them.
- • Pray for opportunities to reach out to your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers with the gospel of Jesus.
- • Continue to pray for your 7 names, looking for ways to serve them.
- • Pray for God to give you at least one person who you can lead to Christ in this coming year.

### Day 40 (June 9) Praises for Friday Evening:

- • Praise God for what He has done in your life over these past 40 days of prayer. Be specific.
- • Praise God for what He's going to do through the newly elected, and re-elected leaders of the world church as they face the upcoming years of leadership and the burden of its responsibilities.
- • Praise God for how He's working, and going to work, in the lives of those 7 names you've been praying for during the 40 Days of Prayer.
- • Praise God that He's going to give you the faith to stand thru the end-times and that soon, He will be coming in the clouds to take us home.
- • Praise God that He has even greater things in store for you, and this is only the beginning of His amazing journey for your life!

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Dear Friends,

The 40 Days of Prayer may be ending today, but your journey with Jesus is only going to get better as you keep seeking Him. As you have been part of this 40 Days of Prayer journey, it is our prayer that you have truly witnessed the power of God in your life. That you have experienced the Holy Spirit bringing you into a true revival and an ongoing reformation experience such as you've never experienced before. And this shouldn't stop at the end of the 40 Days of Prayer but should continue until Jesus comes.

We encourage you to continue to join other believers in prayer. Stay connected with your prayer partners from your group. And don't stop praying for those 7 names (and many more names God might bring to your heart) until you see the answers come.

Remember, "Total Member Involvement" means everyone is to do something for the Lord! Let's remember: "Jesus Is Coming! Get Involved!"

We are excited to hear about your testimonies of what God has done in these 40 Days of Prayer in your life, family, and in your church!

God bless you!

*The AMB Prayer Team*