

Day of Prayer and Fasting

Handbook and Resources

Unlocking Heaven's Storehouse

and Praying for Victory Over Spiritual Breaches

First Quarter 2021

Sabbath, January 2

Revival
& REFORMATION

Prepared for church group and individual use by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in coordination with the Revival and Reformation Committee. Written by Melody Mason for the Day of Prayer and Fasting global initiative.

Visit www.revivalandreformation.org for information.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture is quoted from the New King James Version, copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers.

Contents

An Invitation to Fast and Pray	4
Instructions for Leaders	6
Suggested Sabbath Morning Program	7
Suggested Afternoon Program	8
Appendix	11
Suggested Children's Story	12
Sabbath Morning Sermon	14
Leader's Afternoon Devotional Thought	21
Handout 1 for Private Prayer	25
Handout 2 for Corporate United Prayer	31
Handout 3 for Corporate United Prayer	33

An Invitation to Fast and Pray

If ever there was a time in history that we should be urgently seeking for Holy Spirit power, it is now. Our world is in crisis. Pain and suffering abound, spiritual delusions are increasing, and people are dying without the hope of a Savior. We need the Holy Spirit to empower us to finish God's work so that Jesus can take us home. But before the Holy Spirit will be fully poured out, something significant must happen.

Ellen White writes, "The Lord can do more in one hour than we can do in a whole lifetime, and when He sees that His people are fully consecrated, let me tell you a great work will be done in a short time, and the message of truth will be carried into the dark places of the earth, where it has never been proclaimed" (*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 307). Are we fully consecrated? Are we prepared to be vessels that the Holy Spirit can fill?

Recognizing our great need of deeper consecration, we'd like to invite you to join our church family for a special day of prayer and fasting. Our theme will be "Unlocking Heaven's Storehouse." Our prayers will focus on heart needs: praying to become more like Jesus, growing faith for the hard times, and gaining courage to witness. We will pray especially for deeper consecration so that the glory of God will be more fully realized in our lives.

Why is this day of prayer accompanied by fasting?

We fast because we are in earnest for God's blessing. When we read the Bible, we see that fasting is not an option. It's a given. Matthew 6:17 doesn't say, "If you fast," but rather, "When you fast." If we study all the fasts in the Bible, we find that every time God's people prayed *and fasted*, God worked mightily on their behalf—from deliverance from enemies in battle to supernatural deliverance from prison to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, we see a pattern. This pattern repeats itself all through Christian history. Fasting has always been part of the lifestyle of believers, just like prayer and Bible study. In fact, every major character in the Bible fasted.

We are told, "Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of their Leader. They should *set aside days for fasting and prayer*. Entire abstinence from food may not be required, but they should eat sparingly of the most simple food" (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 188, 189, emphasis supplied).

Fasting is more than just skipping meals. Fasting is choosing to do without something in order to pray more intentionally and with more heart and soul focus. Many choose to skip meals, but not everyone can do without food completely, and not everyone chooses this type of fast. That's okay. We encourage you to pray and ask God what type of fast He wants you to do. You might choose to eat more simply, or you might choose to fast from social media, television, or

other time-consuming habits. Whatever you do, it's important to remember that fasting isn't about earning a heavenly reward. The main point of fasting is removing distractions so we can seek Jesus more wholeheartedly. As Derek Morris, president of Hope Channel, likes to say, "We fast from the world so we can feast on Jesus."

We invite you to be part of this special day! Whether you choose to fast or not, we believe God has a special blessing in store for you.

Perhaps you are wary of corporate prayer because you don't like to pray aloud. We invite you to join anyway. You can pray along with others silently, lifting up the prayer requests of others and praying for the people and things God brings to your heart. And if you fear that your prayers aren't "good enough," know that God hears not only our words but also our hearts. He's not looking for "good enough" prayers but for sincere worshippers seeking Him. Even if we don't know what to pray, He knows. He hears. And He invites us to pray *together*. "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19).

Hebrews 10:24, 25 says, "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

The Day is approaching! And now is the time to pray! Don't miss the storehouse of heaven's blessings that God has for you.

Instructions for Leaders

- Distribute the handout "An Invitation to Fast and Pray" to church members at least a week or two before this special day so members can prepare.
- A Sabbath sermon, "Unlocking Heaven's Storehouse," is included in this packet. We invite your church to share this message during the morning worship service on the day of prayer and fasting. This may inspire more members to join in the afternoon prayer time.
- A children's story is included to help children see the power of prayer.
- A devotional reading for the afternoon prayer program, "Lessons from the Wise and Foolish Virgins," is provided. This devotional reading should be followed by a private prayer time, then a corporate prayer time.
- We recommend scheduling a minimum of 1-2 hours for this afternoon prayer program; many plan to pray together for a full afternoon, however. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead.
- Prepare the handout "Removing the Spiritual Breaches" for the private prayer time.
- Prepare the handouts "Powerful Prayer Promises" and "Prayer Focus" for the corporate prayer time.
- If the day of prayer and fasting happens online, all these resources can be e-mailed to participants.

Suggested Sabbath Morning Program

Suggested Order of Divine Worship Service

Day of Prayer and Fasting, January 2, 2021

Prelude

Platform participants enter

Doxology

Invocation

Offertory

Offering Response

Offertory Prayer

Hymn: "Standing on the Promises" (SDA Hymnal #518)

Children's Story: "Little Boy with Gigantic Feet"

Scripture Reading: 2 Chronicles 7:14

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

Intercessory Prayer

Special Music

SERMON: "Unlocking Heaven's Storehouse"

Closing Hymn: "Showers of Blessing" [SDA Hymnal #195]

Benediction and Announcement of Details for Afternoon Prayer Program

Postlude

Suggested Afternoon Program

Place: Gather in the sanctuary, outside under some trees, or, if your group is small, meet in a comfortable room in someone's home that offers privacy and no distractions. If meeting in person is not permissible, Zoom is an online video conferencing service that might be an option for you (zoom.us). You can also meet by phone.

Opening Praise and Worship (15-20 minutes): Music always sets the mood for worship, so begin with a few songs of worship to inspire reverence and encourage seeking after God. Invite a few members to share 30-second testimonies of answered prayers or praises to God between songs.

Welcome and Announcements:

The leader should welcome people and share a few words of instruction:

- This is a time of prayer and seeking God.
- Anything shared is confidential and should not be shared outside this meeting.
- Don't take prayer requests ahead of time. Explain that this is a time to pray, not talk, so prayer needs will be prayed about during the prayer time, not talked about first.
- Be comfortable during the prayer time. Feel free to change positions—sitting, kneeling, standing, etc.
- Raise your head when you pray. Speak up so others can hear your prayer.
- Prayer is more than just our words. Claim scripture and pray God's promises back to Him. Sing a verse or two of a song, with others joining in. (We've provided special promises for you to claim during the prayer time.)
- When someone prays for a need or person, others are invited to add their own prayers and lift up the needs of others in agreement (Matt. 18:19).
- Claim the righteous life, sacrifice, and ministry of Jesus in prayer (John 14:14; Rev. 8:3).

Opening Prayer

Share the Devotional: Have someone read, or take turns reading, the devotional ("Lessons from the Wise and Foolish Virgins").

Private Prayer Time: Break out for personal prayer time with Handout 1, "Removing the Spiritual Breaches." Take 30 to 60 minutes for this private prayer time. Encourage attendees to use their Bible and a notebook to record what God shows them, then have everyone meet back together (or come back online for the Zoom meeting) at a specific time.

Corporate Prayer Time: Pass out Handout 2, “Prayer Focus for United Prayer,” and Handout 3, “Powerful Prayer Promises.” Take 1-2 hours for this prayer time, and include other heartfelt prayer needs that arise.

During this time, we suggest you encourage people to keep their prayers brief (a single thought, or 1-2 sentences) and take turns praying back and forth. People can pray multiple times, but encourage everyone to give room for the more timid ones to speak up and pray. (More instructions for the prayer leader are given below.)

Testimonies and Thanksgiving: Close with a time of thanksgiving. Allow people to briefly share 1- or 2-minute testimonies of the blessings they received during the day, or of answered prayers.

Encouragement: Encourage people to keep praying for one another, or to set up small prayer groups in their homes if they haven’t already. (If members would like to join daily united prayer calls happening in their part of the world, encourage them to learn about *24/7 United Prayer*. More information can be found online: revivalandreformation.org/resources/all/join-us-for-24/7-united-prayer.)

Break the Fast with a Special Meal: Some churches may choose to have a meal together after the prayer time to break the fast. Keep the meal simple but make the food and atmosphere attractive to create a special occasion. If social distancing prohibits this, do a “praise picnic.” Take turns sharing praises and more testimonies of answered prayer.

Additional Notes for the Prayer Leader:

- *While we provide a prayer focus and encourage searching of the heart, above all, allow the Holy Spirit to lead your prayer time.*
- *Emphasize that while the prayer time may last a while, even a few hours, individual prayers need to be short so many people can actively participate and the prayer time keeps moving. People tend to grow weary with long prayers. We are told the angels grow weary too (Prayer, p. 258).*
- *Remember that silence in prayer time is fine. Don’t feel the need to fill every silent moment or end the prayer time prematurely. While some people jump in and pray quickly, others take longer to feel comfortable praying aloud. When silence happens, let it linger. Just count a few seconds—even just 30 seconds if you’re uncomfortable with silence—to give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to nudge people.*
- *If your congregation isn’t used to praying together in groups and including scripture and singing during the prayer time, you may need to lead by example. Or you might ask others ahead of time to lead, intentionally praying a request from the prayer focus or starting a song during the prayer time. While taking time to pray is*

the priority, this is also an opportunity to teach people how to pray corporately.

In review, here are some brief instructions you can give ahead of time, if desired, for the united prayer time:

- Keep your prayers brief. Prayers in public should be short and right to the point. Save lengthy prayers for the prayer closet.
- Pray one thought at a time, then stop and allow others to pray or agree with you.
- People can pray multiple times, but each prayer should be short.
- Speak up so we can hear you, or be sure to unmute your microphone if on Zoom.
- Turn off your video during prayer time, if on Zoom.
- Please don't dominate the prayer, but allow everyone an opportunity to pray.

If you've never led united prayer before, you can learn more by reading *Praying for Rain: A Mini-Handbook to United Prayer*. It can be found online here:
<https://www.revivalandreformation.org/resources/all/praying-for-rain>

Appendix

Little Boy with Gigantic Feet

By Andrew McChesney

Nine-year-old Wilmot Redd woke up to see that his feet and legs were gigantic. His feet and legs had doubled in size since he went to bed the night before in a village in the West African country of Liberia.

Wilmot tried to slip on a pair of pants, but they were too tight. He tried to put on a pair of shoes, but they were too small. He chose a pair of shorts and ran barefoot to Father.

"My feet are big!" he said. Father looked worried. "Does it hurt?" he asked. "No, nothing hurts," the boy said. "Just my feet are really big. I can't wear pants or shoes."

Father thought the swelling might go down on its own, and he suggested that they wait a few days. But after a week, Wilmot's feet were bigger than ever. Father called the hospital. An ambulance arrived with lights flashing and siren shrieking. The trip to the hospital took 30 minutes.

At the hospital, a physician ran tests but couldn't find anything wrong. Leaving Wilmot at the hospital, Father returned to his village. There an old woman told him, "I just had a vision. Your son has been cursed by someone who lives near here, so you must take him far away. That is the only way that he will be cured."

Father returned to the hospital. Hailing a taxi, he took Wilmot to an uncle's house far away. He wanted the boy to be safe from the curse.

In the new city, Father took Wilmot to another hospital. A physician declared that Wilmot had a kidney infection. After two weeks of treatment, Wilmot's feet and legs returned to their normal size, and the boy was released from the hospital. But Father still believed that he had been cursed and only recovered because they had traveled far away from home. Father made arrangements for Wilmot to live with his uncle.

After four years, when Wilmot was 13, Father moved to another town and sent for his son. He enrolled the boy in the local Seventh-day Adventist school. At the school, Wilmot learned that God loves to answer prayers. He loved God and wanted to show his love by keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. He was baptized.

However, Father worshipped on Sunday, and he was upset about Wilmot's new beliefs. Saturday was a busy day for the family, and Wilmot no longer helped wash clothes or clean the

yard on that day. Father sometimes punished Wilmot by forcing him to go hungry all day on Sabbaths. Wilmot tried to talk to his father about the Sabbath, but Father refused to listen. Wilmot prayed every day for God to soften Father's heart.

One evening during family worship, Wilmot asked Father to show him where the Bible said that Christians should worship on Sunday. Father opened his Bible and looked for a text. He couldn't find any. Then Wilmot turned in his Bible to Luke 4:16 and gave the book to Father. "Read this," he said. Silently, he prayed for God to soften Father's heart.

Father read that Jesus went to church every Sabbath. The verse said, "And as His custom was, He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day." Father looked up with shock. "I didn't realize that Jesus worshipped every Sabbath," he said. "Son, I'm sorry for treating you unkindly."

Wilmot never again had any trouble on Sabbath. He is praying for his Father to become a Seventh-day Adventist. "I love to pray to the heavenly Father," he said. "I put everything into His hands."

[Isn't it wonderful that we serve a God who answers prayer? What are some things you would like to ask God for today? Who would like to pray?]

Unlocking Heaven's Storehouse

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

For more than twenty years, during the days of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the people of Romania suffered great hardship. They were forced to live under the iron-fisted rule of one of the most corrupt leaders of the twentieth century, the Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. Life was difficult for all, but Christians especially suffered under Ceausescu's harsh regime as they endured harassment, persecution, and even torture, imprisonment, and death.

One Christian who suffered from the Communist harassment was a pastor whom we will call Stefan. In 1969 the government took away Pastor Stefan's preaching license and he was left on the streets. Without a way to support his family, Stefan resorted to gluing paper shopping bags together so they could buy food to eat. Despite their impoverished living conditions, Pastor Stefan never lost his heart for pastoring. Each day while he worked, he prayed that God would give him opportunity to serve again. He also prayed earnestly for revival—not just for the Communist persecutors but especially for the Romanian church members themselves.

Four years later, miraculously, Pastor Stefan's preaching license was reinstated, and he was once again assigned to the ministry, this time to a large church in Oradea.

From the beginning in this new church, he emphasized prayer and revival, and he appealed to the church members to repent. He was not content to deal in generalities, but with humble earnestness, and without apology, he showed church members how the Word of God is to be the standard in every area of our lives.

Many in today's day and age would not have been comfortable with Pastor Stefan's approach. How dare he confront people about specific sins and address unholy attitudes and behaviors? Shouldn't that be left to personal conscience? Perhaps. Yet the Romanian church members took Pastor Stefan's appeals to heart—and they repented. And what happened as a result? God sent revival!

After almost six months of earnest prayer and putting away sin within the church, God's Spirit began to be poured out. Although profession of faith during this time meant persecution and hardship (for some even martyrdom), many people, even those who had formerly ridiculed the Christians of Oradea, began coming of their own accord to the church. In previous years the

large congregation of five hundred was lucky if they baptized 10 individuals in a year, but from June to December 1974 the church in Oradea baptized over 250 new converts. By the end of four years, Pastor Stefan's church had doubled in size.

As the story goes, the revival could not be contained in just this single church but continued to spread, affecting the entire Christian community of Romania. In fact, it is believed by many that this revival fire and emphasis on prayer and living by the Word is what led to the eventual overthrow of the Ceausescu regime some fifteen years later. (Story taken from Melody Mason's new book, *Daring to Live by Every Word: Loving God with Heart, Body, Mind and Soul*. Adapted from *Holiness* by Nancy Leigh DeMoss.)

As I reflect on this story, I can't help but think of these words from Ellen White:

"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. The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer, and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife" (*Christian Service*, pp. 41, 42).

Remember the world is watching all those that profess to be Christians, and they mock our attempts at revival. They mock our profession of following Christ that bears little Christlikeness in the life. Meanwhile, we keep praying that they, the mockers, will repent. What if it is *we, the Christians*, who need to repent?

In her book *Holiness*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss writes, "The church has been waiting for the world to get right with God. When will we realize that the world is waiting for the church to get right with God?" (Nancy Leigh DeMoss, *Holiness*, p. 176).

She also writes this about the great revival in Romania:

"In many of our churches, we're knocking ourselves out trying to be 'relevant' so we can attract new members. We don't want to appear to be different, extreme, or too spiritual, for fear of turning off unbelievers. By contrast, once the church in Oradea was willing to be different from the world, the very unbelievers who had once ridiculed them were irresistibly drawn to Christ. We have accommodated to the world rather than calling the world to accommodate to Christ. When will we realize that the world is not impressed with a religious version of itself?" (Ibid., p. 160)

Reflecting on this disturbing lack in modern day Christianity, she comments further, "The fact is, if people are not changing their lifestyle, they're not repenting. And if we're not repenting, then all our singing and praising and praying and producing are useless—perhaps worse than useless, because all the noise and activity may deceive us into thinking that we're OK and that we are actually experiencing revival" (Ibid., p. 161), when we are not! It's time we experience a

genuine revival that brings change from the inside out.

Inspiration tells us, "Just so long as the church is satisfied with small things will it fail of receiving the great things of God" (*Review and Herald*, May 19, 1904). Have we become satisfied with small things? Have we become content with a superficial experience, and with superficial blessings?

As it's often been said, "When man works, man works, but when man prays, God works." Before God can do what He's truly longing to do, before this great, hoped-for Holy Spirit outpouring that we've been praying about for so many years can occur, we need a much deeper experience with God. We also need much deeper consecration.

Ellen White writes:

"The Lord can do more in one hour than we can do in a whole lifetime, and when He sees that His people are *fully consecrated*, let me tell you a great work will be done in a short time, and the message of truth will be carried into the dark places of the earth, where it has never been proclaimed" (*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 307, emphasis supplied).

If being "fully consecrated" is the key to God doing a mighty work that will reach the darkest places of our world, what is holding us back from being fully consecrated?

Fleeing from a Form of Godliness

A number of years ago, in the Congo, there was a pop-star singer. He was very popular. But the Lord touched his heart and he gave his life to Christ. What he found in the church shocked him. In fact, he wrote a song about his experience. His song, "Confusion on Confusion," went something like this: "I was in the world and I was tired of the world. And there were many bad things there. And so I ran to the church for safety and rest. But when I got to the church I was sad because I found that the world, too, had already come to live in the church."

He thought when he became a Christian he would escape the world by coming to the church, but instead he found the world in the church. Sadly, this is too often what we find today.

"Many who call themselves Christians are mere human moralists. They have refused the gift which alone could enable them to honor Christ by representing Him to the world. The work of the Holy Spirit is to them a strange work. They are not doers of the Word. The heavenly principles that distinguish those who are one with Christ from those who are one with the world have become almost indistinguishable. The professed followers of Christ are no longer a separate and peculiar people. The line of demarcation is indistinct. The people are subordinating themselves to the world, to its practices, its

customs, its selfishness. The church has gone over to the world in transgression of the law, when the world should have come over to the church in obedience to the law. Daily the church is being converted to the world" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 315).

Ellen White, addressing the church during the late 1800s, makes the shocking statement that not even ONE in twenty whose names are registered in church books are prepared to end their earthly history. In fact, she states that if they did, many would find themselves without hope and without God, just as any other common sinner (*Christian Service*, p. 41).

If this was the case of so many in the church in the 1800s, what would be our story today? Yes, sadly, we are told that the most popular religion of the last days will be a *religion of form*.

The Bible tells us:

"But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, *having a form of godliness but denying its power*. And from such people turn away!" (2 Tim. 3:1-5)

That sounds like a perfect description of our world today!

Referring to the scribes and Pharisees of His day, Jesus said, "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me" (Matt. 15:8).

It's easy to point fingers of condemnation at the scribes and Pharisees. After all, they crucified Jesus. However, Ellen White writes, "To substitute external forms of religion for holiness of heart and life is still as pleasing to the unrenewed nature as it was in the days of these Jewish teachers" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 387).

While we may be able to fool ourselves some of the time, and we may be able to fool others most of the time, we can't fool God any time. If we truly want to see our prayers answered and truly want the Holy Spirit to be poured out, we must plead with God to change our hearts and make us new creatures in Him.

A Time to Fast and Pray

In the book of Joel, we find a nation in great distress, just as we are experiencing today. As a result of this distress, the spiritual leaders called a solemn assembly and gathered the people together for fasting and prayer. We read, "Let the priests, who minister to the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar; let them say, 'Spare Your people, O Lord, and do not give

Your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them'" (Joel 2:17).

What would be the result of this time of corporate fasting, supplication, and intercession? The prophet Joel continues:

"Then the Lord will be zealous for His land, and pity His people. The Lord will answer and say to His people, 'Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, and you will be satisfied by them; I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations. . . . So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people shall never be put to shame'" (Joel 2:18, 19, 25, 26).

But this wasn't all that would happen. A few verses later we read about a great spiritual outpouring that would take place. "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days" (Joel 2:28, 29).

Ellen White writes,

"If this prophecy of Joel met a partial fulfillment in the days of the apostles, we are living in a time when it is to be even more evidently manifest to the people of God. He will so bestow His Spirit upon His people that they will become a light amid the moral darkness; and great light will be reflected in all parts of the world. O that our faith might be increased, that the Lord might work mightily with His people" (Manuscript 49, 1908).

Pastor Mark Finley tells how amazed he and his wife were some years ago when they attended the Shenyang church in China (just north of North Korea). This church is one of the largest Seventh-day Adventist churches in the world today. At the time they visited, the membership was already well over 6,000. This is unbelievable, especially since the church started with only nine members. It has since spawned over 300 church plants with as many as 50 to several hundred in each church plant.

When Pastor Finley asked the local pastor to explain the secret to their amazing growth, he was told, "It's prayer! We meet each morning from 4:30 a.m. to 6 a.m. to pray. And 150 or so people come every day for this prayer meeting. These seasons of prayer are what unleash God's power for growth and revival. We meet so early because the people are all busy professionals, and some of them are mothers that have children to take care of. So they come to pray before they need to start the responsibilities of the day" (story retold in *Ministry*, Aug. 2019, p. 13).

J. Edwin Orr, historian on worldwide revivals, once wrote, "No great spiritual awakening has begun anywhere in the world apart from united prayer—Christians persistently praying for the revival" (J. Oswald Sanders, *Prayer Power Unlimited*, p. 120).

Let us take advantage of the gift we've been given, the privilege of both private and corporate prayer. We are promised, "When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God's people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 124).

Desperate for God to Work

All over the world, God is working. And churches, communities, families, and individuals are grasping hold of the beautiful power of prayer. But what about us? Are we also seeking God's blessing? How desperate are we to see the Holy Spirit poured out? How desperate are we for personal revival today? Are we desperate enough to step out of our comfortable routine to join our brothers and sisters in prayer?

A man once asked his pastor what it would take for a true Holy Spirit revival to come upon his life and ministry. The pastor explained that he would have to baptize the man in order to show him. The man thought this was a bit strange, but he agreed, so they proceeded to the baptistry.

After lowering themselves into the baptismal tank, the pastor covered the nose of the man and proceeded to gently lay him back under the water, as usual. However, rather than lifting the man right back up, the pastor continued to hold him under the water. The man, not sure what was happening, began to struggle a bit, however the pastor's grip was firm. After a few moments, panic seized the man, and thinking that maybe the pastor was trying to drown him, he began to thrash and jerk about violently, trying to get free. At this point the pastor brought him to the surface.

Visibly shaken and gasping for breath, the man stuttered, "What in the world are you trying to do? Do you want to drown me?" Calmly, the pastor replied, "*When you are as desperate for revival as you were just now for that next breath of air, then the Lord will send revival.*"

Jeremiah tells us, "And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13). And in Joel we read, "So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm" (Joel 2:13).

In Genesis 26, we read how Isaac, as he followed God, had to re-dig the wells that his father had dug because the Philistines had come and stopped them up with earth after Abraham's

death. And so it is today, in a spiritual sense. Today we need to re-dig our wells, both individually and corporately as a church. While we've been sleeping, the enemy has been filling our spiritual wells with the *earthliness* of the world. This *earthliness* must be removed so that our Father's water of life can flow freely once again.

Ellen White writes:

"Beware of procrastination. Do not put off the work of forsaking your sins and seeking purity of heart through Jesus. Here is where thousands upon thousands have erred, to their eternal loss. I will not here dwell upon the shortness and uncertainty of life; but there is a terrible danger—a danger not sufficiently understood—in delaying to yield to the pleading voice of God's Holy Spirit, in choosing to live in sin; for such this delay really is. Sin, however small it may be esteemed, can be indulged in only at the peril of infinite loss" (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 32, 33).

We don't have another 2,000 years as a church to figure out how to fulfill the great commission that we've been given. We probably don't even have another 100 years if we look at the signs of the times in which we live. Time is running out. Jesus is coming soon. And the gospel message must go to the entire world. But before the Holy Spirit can be poured out, we must put away all pretense. We must be consecrated *personally*. And then, we can only imagine what will happen!

"The Lord did not lock the reservoir of heaven after pouring His Spirit upon the early disciples. We, also, may receive of the fullness of His blessing. Heaven is full of the treasures of His grace, and those who come to God in faith may claim all that He has promised. If we do not have His power, it is because of our spiritual lethargy, our indifference, our indolence. Let us come out of this formality [religion of form] and deadness. There is a great work to be done for this time, and we do not half realize what the Lord is willing to do for His people" (*Review and Herald*, June 4, 1889).

Did you catch that last sentence? "We do not *half realize* what the Lord is willing to do for His people"! The gospel still possesses the same power it had in apostolic times. God is still the same. His promises have not changed. He's given us the keys we need for success. *But He's waiting on us!*

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

If we take God at His Word, if we humble our hearts and truly seek His face and pray, repenting of our sins, heaven cannot hold back the blessing that will be poured out upon us!

[Invite people to attend the afternoon prayer time!]

Lessons from the Wise and Foolish Virgins

(Preparing to Remove the Spiritual Breaches)

Before we begin this special afternoon of prayer, we are going to take some time to reflect on the story of the wise and foolish virgins. The following reading is an excerpt from *Christ's Object Lessons*, chapter 29, "To Meet the Bridegroom."

Christ with His disciples is seated upon the Mount of Olives. The sun has set behind the mountains, and the heavens are curtained with the shades of evening. In full view is a dwelling house lighted up brilliantly as if for some festive scene. The light streams from the openings, and an expectant company wait around, indicating that a marriage procession is soon to appear. In many parts of the East, wedding festivities are held in the evening. The bridegroom goes forth to meet his bride and bring her to his home. By torchlight the bridal party proceed from her father's house to his own, where a feast is provided for the invited guests. In the scene upon which Christ looks, a company are awaiting the appearance of the bridal party, intending to join the procession.

Lingering near the bride's house are ten young women robed in white. Each carries a lighted lamp and a small flagon for oil. All are anxiously watching for the appearance of the bridegroom. But there is a delay. Hour after hour passes; the watchers become weary and fall asleep. At midnight the cry is heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." The sleepers, suddenly awaking, spring to their feet. They see the procession moving on, bright with torches and glad with music. They hear the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. The ten maidens seize their lamps and begin to trim them, in haste to go forth. But five have neglected to fill their flasks with oil. They did not anticipate so long a delay, and they have not prepared for the emergency. In distress they appeal to their wiser companions saying, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out." But the waiting five, with their freshly trimmed lamps, have emptied their flagons. They have no oil to spare, and they answer, "Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves."

While they went to buy, the procession moved on, and left them behind. The five with lighted lamps joined the throng and entered the house with the bridal train, and the door was shut. When the foolish virgins reached the banqueting hall, they received an unexpected denial. The master of the feast declared, "I know you not." They were left standing without, in the empty street, in the blackness of the night.

As Christ sat looking upon the party that waited for the bridegroom, He told His disciples the story of the ten virgins, by their experience illustrating the experience of the church that shall live just before His second coming.

The two classes of watchers represent the two classes who profess to be waiting for their Lord. They are called virgins because they profess a pure faith. By the lamps is represented the word of God. The psalmist says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105. The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. . . . "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts . . ." Zechariah 4:6.

. . . In the parable, all the ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom. All had lamps and vessels for oil. For a time there was seen no difference between them. So with the church that lives just before Christ's second coming. All have a knowledge of the Scriptures. All have heard the message of Christ's near approach, and confidently expect His appearing. But as in the parable, so it is now. A time of waiting intervenes, faith is tried; and when the cry is heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him," many are unready. They have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit.

Without the Spirit of God a knowledge of His word is of no avail. The theory of truth, unaccompanied by the Holy Spirit, cannot quicken the soul or sanctify the heart. One may be familiar with the commands and promises of the Bible; but unless the Spirit of God sets the truth home, the character will not be transformed. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit, men will not be able to distinguish truth from error, and they will fall under the masterful temptations of Satan.

The class represented by the foolish virgins are not hypocrites. They have a regard for the truth, they have advocated the truth, they are attracted to those who believe the truth; but they have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit's working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old nature to be broken up. This class are represented also by the stony-ground hearers. They receive the word with readiness, but they fail of assimilating its principles. Its influence is not abiding. The Spirit works upon man's heart, according to his desire and consent implanting in him a new nature; but the class represented by the foolish virgins have been content with a superficial work. They do not know God. They have not studied His character; they have not held communion with Him; therefore they do not know how to trust, how to look and live. Their service to God degenerates into a form. "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." Ezekiel 33:31. The apostle Paul points out that this will be the special characteristic of those who live just before Christ's second coming. He says, "In the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of

their own selves; . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

This is the class that in time of peril are found crying, Peace and safety. They lull their hearts into security, and dream not of danger. When startled from their lethargy, they discern their destitution, and entreat others to supply their lack; but in spiritual things no man can make up another's deficiency. The grace of God has been freely offered to every soul. The message of the gospel has been heralded, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17. But character is not transferable. No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another. No man can impart to another the character which is the fruit of the Spirit's working. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [the land], as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Ezekiel 14:20.

It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied.

The ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth's history. All claim to be Christians. All have a call, a name, a lamp, and all profess to be doing God's service. All apparently wait for Christ's appearing. But five are unready (Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, chapter 29).

This is a sobering reading, but we need to be reminded of this because we live in sobering times. In Isaiah 58, God's people are instructed, "Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In" (Isa. 58:12).

How do we practically become the repairer of the breach for the church, or for our lost loved ones who don't know Jesus? We start by asking God to repair our own spiritual breaches, for we cannot stand strong on behalf of others while there is sin and compromise in our own lives. But if we allow God to search our hearts and clear away the things that are holding back His blessing, imagine what He will do in answer to our prayers?

"There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church"

(Selected Messages, book 1, p. 124).

To begin, we are going to take about 30 to 60 minutes for personal, private heart searching and prayer. Take time with your Bible to prayerfully read and pray over the handout "Removing Spiritual Breaches." Allow the Lord to search your heart. Confess whatever sins He brings to your mind. After this personal prayer time, we will come back together for a time of corporate prayer. Together we will pray for healing and spiritual deliverance as a church.

[Leader note: Perhaps announce a specific time to meet back together at the group location, or to come back on Zoom if the prayer meeting is being conducted online.]

Removing the Spiritual Breaches And Becoming a Repairer of the Breach

As we recognize that the enemy is trying to weaken our spiritual fortress, so he can overcome us and keep us from being fully effective in God's service, we should prayerfully ask the Lord to search our heart (Ps. 139:23, 24). The Bible tells us, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves" (2 Cor. 13:5).

"We must have a knowledge of ourselves, a knowledge that will result in contrition, before we can find pardon and peace. . . . It is only he who knows himself to be a sinner that Christ can save. . . . We must know our real condition, or we shall not feel our need of Christ's help. We must understand our danger, or we shall not flee to the refuge. We must feel the pain of our wounds, or we should not desire healing" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 158).

Thankfully God's Word gives great hope to all who flee to Jesus as a refuge. In 1 John 1:9 we read, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And John 6:37 tells us, "The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." God is just waiting to encircle the humble penitent sinner in His arms of love! Keep this ever in your mind as you prayerfully read through the following pages.

In this handout you will find a list of common spiritual breaches that hinder the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We encourage you to take time prayerfully to review this list. Don't forget to also look up the promises mentioned. As you pray, ask the Lord if there are any other spiritual breaches that may be hindering your walk with Him, things that might not be mentioned here. If we ask with an earnest heart, He will show us!

We warn you that the heart searching might be painful at times, but it is a beautiful sacrifice that we can offer God as we ask for cleansing and healing. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise" (Ps. 51:17).

We also know that when we cling to His promises for spiritual victory, He will honor His Word, for "The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 148). God's Word is faithful, and He will save all who call out to Him (see Heb. 7:25).

[Use a notebook or a blank sheet of paper and write down the things that God convicts you of as you read through the following breaches. We encourage you to follow the six steps to freedom at the end of this reading. Your personal breaches are not meant to be shared with anyone unless you need to ask forgiveness from someone. This is just between you and God.]

Common Breaches That Hold Back the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Our Lives

Unconfessed sin: Anything that we've done wrong toward God, His law, our own body, or others and have not made right. (You'll notice some overlap in the following categories.)

- **Promises for those who confess their sins** (1 John 1:9; 1 Cor. 15:57)

Idols: In this case, we are not talking about "graven images." We are referring to anything that comes between God and us, or anything that becomes more important than our relationship and quality time with God each day. If we have an "idol," it will often consume our attention, focus, and thought life to the exclusion of other healthy activities, family needs, or ministry tasks. (Note: Even "ministry" can become an idol if it comes between us and maintaining a daily connection with God!)

- **Promises for those who desire to put away idols** (Ezek. 36:25-27; Jer. 24:7)

Addictions: These breaches could be the same as our "idols" or they might be different. An addiction might be a physical substance or food (such as sugar), or a habit or activity that you can't imagine giving up: gossiping, watching TV, social media, pornography, or attention. But if God is to remain the King of your life, He must be the Lord of your life! *In fact, He must be our addiction.*

- **Promises for overcoming addictions** (Luke 18:27; Ps. 55:16-18)

Ungodly Mindsets: Ungodly mindsets might include pride in our achievements and spiritual accomplishments, pride in our talents, pride in our leadership and status, superiority over others, arrogance, self-righteousness, selfishness, self-seeking, self-promotion, greed, lust, jealousy, envy, vanity, gluttony, anxiety, irritability, impatience, anger, bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness, discontentment, unthankfulness, fear, self-pity, pessimism, doubt toward God, spiritual laziness and apathy, unbelief, hate, victimization, lack of a teachable spirit, disrespect for those in authority, unholy thoughts and desires, and seeking our own rather than the best interests of others.

- **Promises for overcoming ungodly mindsets** (Isa. 26:3; Ps. 119:165; Phil. 4:8)

Ungodly Conversations: These breaches are seldom addressed, yet they are quite prevalent, even in the lives of professing Christians. They might include gossiping (even spiritual gossiping, while justifying ourselves that we are edifying others), sarcasm, criticism, backbiting, judgmentalism, complaining, murmuring, exaggerated tales, lying, inappropriate flirtation, vulgar and foul language, vocalized disrespect, cynicism, expressions of doubt toward God or leaders, and more. God tells us, "Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken

down, without walls" (Prov. 25:28).

- **Promises for overcoming ungodly conversations** (Isa. 6:5-7; Eph. 4:22, 23, 29)

Ungodly Behaviors: Some of these breaches may be quite normal in society, but they are not acceptable to God. These behaviors might include self promotion, self-flattery, manipulation, taking advantage of others' weaknesses, practicing fraud, cheating, abusing others' trust, failing to honor our word, being lazy on the job, being greedy, not following health laws and neglecting to care for our bodies (God's temple), stealing, backstabbing, disrespecting those in authority, tearing down another's character, wasting time, wasting money, wasting resources, falling into debt, using people to get what we want, expecting to be waited on hand and foot, always trying to prove we are right, and being defiant when we are corrected.

- **Promises for overcoming ungodly behaviors** (Rom. 12:18-21; 1 Cor. 10:13)

Ungodly Relationships: The most common relationship breaches come from inappropriate relationships between the opposite sexes, unbiblical same-sex relationships, or romantic relationships between a believer and an unbeliever. Emotional adultery and lust could also fit in this category.

- **Promises for victory over ungodly relationships** (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Sam. 16:7)

Worldly Preoccupations: Satan's key goal is to get us to love the world rather than God. Breaches might include status, love of money, love of expensive fashions or cars, and excessive love for temporal pleasures. God tells us, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt. 6:21).

- **Promises for overcoming worldly preoccupations** (Col. 3:1-3; Rom. 12:1, 2)

Satanic Strongholds: Obviously, as Bible-believing Christians, we should never be involved with certain things! Drugs, tobacco, alcohol (or any other addictive substance), and anything of the occult are off limits for Christians. So also should be much of the available secular music, as well as movies, TV programs, and books featuring magic, spiritualism, mysticism, science fiction, witches, or vampires. The Bible tells us to allow no fellowship between light and darkness.

- **Promises for overcoming Satanic strongholds** (2 Cor. 10:3, 4; Ps. 40:2, 3)

Ungodly Sins of Omission: Often we congratulate ourselves on what we aren't doing wrong and fail to recognize what we aren't doing right. These "breaches of omission" might include lack of truly seeking after God with the whole heart, lack of complete heart surrender, lack of hatred for sin and those things that wound Christ afresh, lack of earnest desire to receive more of the Holy Spirit (the only thing that will give us victory over sin), lack of spiritual zeal and life,

lack of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives (see Gal. 5:22), lack of faith, lack of humility, lack of trust in God's Word, lack of sincere interest in deep Bible study and prayer, lack of spiritual fortitude and backbone when the truths of God's Word are under attack, lack of self control, lack of caring for our physical bodies so that we can be more receptive to the Holy Spirit, lack of warmth and love toward our brothers and sisters, lack of friendliness toward strangers and those different from us, lack of kindness and willingness to sacrifice for the least of these, lack of taking up our cross daily and denying ourselves for the sake of the gospel, lack of willingness to wrestle and agonize in prayer for others, lack of desire and effort to stand in the gap as intercessors for a perishing land, lack of pain over how we hinder and hold back God's work by our spiritual apathy, and the list goes on.

- **Promises for forgiveness of sins of omission** (1 John 1:9; Eph. 2:8, 9; Jer. 33:3)

Thankfully we are told that Christ came to set the captives free, to make our crooked ways straight, and to break apart the chains that bind us (see Isa. 58:6; Isa. 45:2).

Ellen White writes, "Let sin be called by its right name, and let it be purged from the church by confession, repentance, and reformation, that the members may not present before angels and men a misrepresentation of the truths they profess to believe. Let the words of the apostle, spoken so clearly and distinctly, and with such tenderness and love, break down every barrier. Let God's people make earnest, thorough work for repentance. Do not be zealous to humble one another. Humble yourselves. Take hold of your own case, and by humble confession stand clear before God" (*Signs of the Times*, Oct. 30, 1901).

Six Steps to Freedom

1. Humbly acknowledge to God the specific sin that comes to your mind. (Yes, He already knows, but speaking it to God brings it to the surface so that He is able to remove it from your heart. Acknowledging your specific sin to God is like saying, "God, I finally get it! I agree with You! This was wrong!")

2. Ask forgiveness from God. It's only when we first acknowledge the sin and then ask Him to wash us clean, based on the merits of His shed blood, that the cleansing can really take place. It is at that moment that we ask for and receive His forgiveness that we really are washed clean.

3. Turn and walk a new and different way. The Bible calls it repentance. It simply means deciding to no longer do that sin again. This is not just a feeling of remorse for our sin; it's a practical change so that we don't allow that sin to find its way back into our hearts and lives ever again. Find specific promises in the Bible to claim as you pray that God helps you walk a new path in victory and His strength. Not only should we walk a new way but we should also ask God to give us a new heart so that we loathe the sins we once embraced!

"Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life" (Steps to Christ, p. 23).

4. Ask God to show you if anything else needs to be done about your specific sin. If your sin affected others, you should go to those you have wronged and ask forgiveness. (Whether or not they extend forgiveness, at least you've done your part.) If you stole, you may need to repay with interest. If you lied, you may need to set the record straight by telling the truth and attempting to undo the effects of your lie as much as possible.

IMPORTANT: There are a few exceptions to this step. If your specific sin involved something that you harbored in your mind such as lust or jealousy, then it is NOT always appropriate to confess those particular sins to the target of your wrong thoughts.

There is no set formula for making wrongs right. That is why we must go to God and say, "God, I'm willing to do whatever needed make this right—so please show me what I need to do." It's a hard prayer to pray, but if we allow God to direct us, it is amazing how radically our lives can be changed in even a short time. Sometimes God may want you to do something large to make right what you did, but other times His requests may be as simple as beginning to show the love of Christ to someone in a practical way.

5. Obey what God leads you to do. When you say to God that you are willing to do whatever it takes to make things right, then do whatever He shows you! And claim His promises. He will help you. Keep praying the Word!

Just as Jacob wrestled through the night, we too must wrestle until the breaking of day. We must hold on to God, saying, "I will not let You go until You bless me! I will not let go until You give me deliverance in this area of my life!" This is not a presumptuous prayer. We aren't praying for selfish desires but for victory over the spiritual breaches in our lives that are holding back God's blessing. We are praying for spiritual fortification. We are praying to have a new heart and a new spirit so that the Holy Spirit can truly be poured out. These are things that God has promised to give us.

6. Start a Bible verse collection of promises to claim when you are tempted to return to your old ways. Any time you see the enemy trying to bring spiritual compromise back into your life, fight back with God's Word. God will give you the victory.

Ellen White tells us, "With watchfulness and prayer [our] weakest points can be so guarded as to become [our] strongest points, and [we] can encounter temptation without being overcome" (*Pastoral Ministry*, p. 25).

These thoughts are taken from the book Daring to Ask for More: Divine Keys to Answered Prayer by Melody Mason, copyright Pacific Press, 2014.

Prayer Focus for United Prayer

[The following prayer topics are to give focus as you pray for deliverance from spiritual breaches and for deeper heart consecration. God may also bring additional prayers to your mind. Pray these as the Holy Spirit leads. We encourage you to look up these Bible promises as you pray.]

- **Thank God** that He is a God who hears and answers prayer. (Matt. 7:7)
- **Thank God** that He cannot lie, and His Word does not return to Him void. (Isa. 55:11)
- **Thank God** that when we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (1 John 5:14)
- **Thank God** for His exceeding great and precious promises. (2 Pet. 1:4)
- **Thank God** for His great love and the gift of eternal life. (John 3:16)
- **Thank God** for forgiveness of sin and victory in Jesus. (1 John 1:9; 1 Cor. 15:57)
- **Thank God** that His mercies are new every morning. (Lam. 3:22, 23)
- **Ask God** to revive us and to breathe life into our dry bones. (Ezek. 37:5)
- **Ask God** for greater revival, founded upon God's Word, for our churches. (Ps. 85:6)
- **Ask God** to help us seek Him with all our hearts and put Him first each day. (Jer. 29:13)
- **Ask God** to help us love Him with all our heart and all our soul. (Deut. 30:6)
- **Ask God** to help us love one another as He loves us. (John 13:34)
- **Ask God** to heal broken relationships and restore unity in our families. (Ps. 68:6)
- **Ask God** to bring unity in our church and to help us press together. (John 17:22)
- **Ask God** to help us break ties with spiritually compromising relationships. (2 Cor. 6:14)
- **Ask God** to convict of any double standard that may be in our life. (1 Sam. 16:7)
- **Ask God** to set us free from idols/addictions that separate us from Him. (Ezek. 36:25)
- **Ask God** to take away our lethargy and give us a new heart for Him. (Ezek. 36:26)
- **Ask God** to give us victory over any hurtful or ungodly mindsets. (Phil. 2:5; 4:8)
- **Ask God** to deliver us from the tendency to speak unchristlike words. (Eph. 4:29)
- **Ask God** to convict our hearts of ungodly behaviors or choices we make. (1 Cor. 10:13)

- **Ask God** to set us free from worldly preoccupations. (Rom. 12:1, 2)
- **Ask God** to deliver us from spiritual breaches and fortify us for His glory. (1 Cor. 15:57)
- **Ask God** to deliver us from any spiritual or satanic strongholds. (2 Cor. 10:3, 4)
- **Ask God** to forgive us for our many sins of omission. (Rom. 8:26)
- **Ask God** to deliver us from our lukewarm Laodicean spirit. (Rev. 3:15, 16)
- **Ask God** to help us see our great spiritual need. (Rev. 3:17)
- **Ask God** to remove spiritual blindness from our eyes. (Rev. 3:18)
- **Ask God** to take away our spirit of murmuring and complaining. (Num. 14:27)
- **Ask God** to give us a spirit of praise and gratitude in all circumstances. (1 Thess. 5:18)
- **Ask God** to give us hearts of humility toward God and each other. (Ps. 51:17)
- **Ask God** to give us forgiveness toward those who have wounded us. (Matt. 6:14)
- **Ask God** to heal us of our own scars and wounds. (Jer. 30:17)
- **Ask God** for a deeper measure of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)
- **Ask God** to teach us how to pray and truly dare to ask for more. (Eph. 3:20)
- **Ask God** to help us persevere in prayer—to not let go until He answers. (Gen. 32:26)
- **Ask God** to make our sins as white as snow. (Isa. 1:18)
- **Ask God** to help us learn to delight in His Word. (Jer. 15:16)
- **Ask God** to teach us how to pray His Word with confidence. (Ps. 119:9, 11, 89)
- **Ask God** to help us be doers of His Word, not just hearers. (James 1:22)
- **Ask God** for a faith that will not be moved in trial. (Ps. 16:8)
- **Ask God** for a faith to believe even when we cannot see what He's doing. (John 20:29)
- **Ask God** for strength to stand strong in the coming storms. (Deut. 33:25)
- **Ask God** to help us accept the free gift of salvation. (Eph. 2:8, 9)
- **Ask God** to help us accept Jesus' robe of righteousness. (Isa. 61:10)
- **Ask God** to help us be repairers of the breach. (Isa. 58:12)
- **Ask God** to restore the years the locusts have eaten in our lives. (Joel 2:25, 26)
- **Ask God** to help us learn what it means to seek Him first. (Matt. 6:33)

Powerful Prayer Promises

[A Collection of Bible Promises and Thoughts from Spirit of Prophecy]

“Grasp His promises as leaves from the tree of life: ‘Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.’ John 6:37. As you come to Him, believe that He accepts you, because He has promised. You can never perish while you do this—never” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 66).

“As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Pet. 1:3, 4).

“All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. . . . Through co-operation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 827).

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

“Just as long as the church is satisfied with small things, it is disqualified to receive the great things of God” (*Home Missionary*, Nov. 1, 1893).

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

“The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it” (*Review and Herald*, Mar. 19, 1895).

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

“Will we wrestle with God in prayer? Will we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? This is what we need and may have at this time. . . . If we will walk humbly with God, God will walk with us” (*Prayer*, p. 87).

"If two of you AGREE on earth concerning anything that they ask, IT WILL BE DONE for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:19, 20).

"The greatest blessing that God can give to man is the spirit of earnest prayer. All heaven is open before the man of prayer. . . . The ambassadors of Christ will have power with the people after they have, with earnest supplication, come before God" (*Prayer*, p. 83).

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask ANYTHING according to His WILL, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).

"All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 149).

"And WHATEVER things you ask in prayer, BELIEVING, you will receive" (Matt. 21:22).

"Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 509).

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me . . . to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"If you want power you may have it; it is waiting your draft upon it. Only believe in God, take Him at His Word, act by faith, and blessings will come" (*Prayer*, p. 84).

"In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22).

"There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God" (*Christian Service*, p. 254).

"For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones'" (Isa. 57:15).

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

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise" (Ps. 51:17).

"The greatest victories to the church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or the favor of men. They are those victories that are gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest, agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 203).

"You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2). "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you WILL receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24).

"It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 525).

"If you ABIDE in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it SHALL be done for you" (John 15:7).

"If we desire to know and to do God's will, His promises are ours" (*From Heaven With Love*, p. 166).

"With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God ALL THINGS are possible" (Mark 10:27).

"Natural impossibilities cannot prevent the work of the Omnipotent One" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 535).

"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man AVAILS much" (James 5:16).

"An appeal to Heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of kings" (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 82).

"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have BELIEVED" (John 20:29).

"There is no danger that the Lord will neglect the prayers of His people. The danger is that in temptation and trial they will become discouraged, and fail to persevere in prayer" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 175).

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

"The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 148).

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly ABOVE all that we ask or think, according to the POWER [His power] that works in us" (Eph. 3:20).

"The Lord will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him" (*My Life Today*, p. 55).

"Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is NOTHING too hard for You" (Jer. 32:17).

"It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 146).

"Ask, and it WILL be given to you; seek, and you WILL find; knock, and it WILL be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7).

"In sincerity, in soul hunger, cry after God. Wrestle with the heavenly agencies until you have the victory. Put your whole being into the Lord's hands, soul, body, and spirit, and resolve to be His loving, consecrated agency, moved by His will, controlled by His mind, infused by His Spirit" (*Prayer*, p. 75).

"And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32).

"Man can accomplish nothing without God, and God has arranged His plans so as to accomplish nothing in the restoration of the human race without the cooperation of the human with the divine. The part man is required to sustain is immeasurably small, yet in the plan of God it is just that part that is needed to make the work a success" (*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 319).

"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

"We must look to Christ; we must resist as He resisted; we must pray as He prayed; we must agonize as He agonized, if we would conquer as He conquered" (*That I May Know Him*, p. 34).

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

"Just believe and praise God and go forward. We are almost home. . . . Bear your whole weight on the promises of God. Believe it is your privilege to believe" (Letter 31, Jan. 1, 1887).

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