



40 DAYS

OF PRAYER

1 OCTOBER - 9 NOVEMBER 2018

— *for* —
**THE CAPE
CONFERENCE
*Business
Session***



Seventh-day
Adventist[®] Church

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Introduction	4
Abbreviations	4
Daily Devotions	5
1 October 2018 (Day 1)	6
2 October 2018 (Day 2)	6
3 October 2018 (Day 3)	7
4 October 2018 (Day 4)	7
5 October 2018 (Day 5)	8
6 October 2018 (Day 6)	8
7 October 2018 (Day 7)	9
8 October 2018 (Day 8)	9
9 October 2018 (Day 9)	10
10 October 2018 (Day 10)	10
11 October 2018 (Day 11)	11
12 October 2018 (Day 12)	11
13 October 2018 (Day 13)	12
14 October 2018 (Day 14)	13
15 October 2018 (Day 15)	13
16 October 2018 (Day 16)	14
17 October 2018 (Day 17)	15
18 October 2018 (Day 18)	15
19 October 2018 (Day 19)	16
20 October 2018 (Day 20)	16
21 October 2018 (Day 21)	17
22 October 2018 (Day 22)	18
23 October 2018 (Day 23)	18
24 October 2018 (Day 24)	18
25 October 2018 (Day 25)	19
26 October 2018 (Day 26)	19
27 October 2018 (Day 27)	20
28 October 2018 (Day 28)	20
29 October 2018 (Day 29)	20

30 October 2018 (Day 30)	21
31 October 2018 (Day 31)	21
1 November 2018 (Day 32).....	22
2 November 2018 (Day 33).....	22
3 November 2018 (Day 34).....	23
4 November 2018 (Day 35).....	23
5 November 2018 (Day 36).....	23
6 November 2018 (Day 37).....	24
7 November 2018 (Day 38).....	24
8 November 2018 (Day 39).....	25
9 November 2018 (Day 40).....	25
Weekly Prayer Meetings/Cell Groups.....	26
Prayer Meeting: 3 October 2018 / Week 1	27
Prayer Meeting: 10 October 2018 / Week 2	30
Prayer Meeting: 17 October 2018 / Week 3	35
Prayer Meeting: 24 October 2018 / Week 4	39
Prayer Meeting: 31 October 2018 / Week 5	43
Prayer Meeting: 7 November 2018 / Week 6	47
Special Day of Prayer & Fasting	51
Sabbath, 6 October 2018:.....	51
“United Prayer Pointers”	51
Revival & Reformation Initiatives	56
Copyright Page & Endnotes.....	57

INTRODUCTION¹

Welcome to the Cape Conference *40 Days of Prayer* in preparation for our upcoming Business Session from 9-12 November 2018.

It is essential for us to prepare spiritually for these important meetings and we pray that these *40 Days of Prayer* will aid you in preparing spiritually, in being in tune with God, filled with His Holy Spirit, surrendered to His will and in a position to be used by God as His instrument.

We have a number of initiatives planned during our *40 Days of Prayer* that we invite you to participate in and benefit from:

- **Initiative #1: A special daily devotion for each of the 40 days**
- **Initiative #2: A special programme for prayer meetings/cell groups**
- **Initiative #3: A special Sabbath of prayer and fasting**

As we seek an ever-deepening walk with the Lord during these 40 days, both personally and collectively, it is our prayer that we all may experience (or perhaps, re-experience) the transforming power of the gospel in our lives, which would prepare us to be the people God desires us to be and which would enable us to share the gospel message to the world with power!

Wishing you God's blessings!

ABBREVIATIONS

ESV: English Standard Version

KJV: King James Version

NASB: New American Standard Bible

NIV: New International Version

NKJV: New King James Version

SDA: Seventh-day Adventist

¹ Prepared by the Prayer Sub-Committee for Session (Mrs N Papu, Pastor JA Gouws and Pastor D Grigg)

DAILY DEVOTIONS²

We have supplied a special daily devotion for each of the 40 Days of Prayer.

Each daily devotion contains:

- **A Bible reading**
- **An excerpt from *Steps to Christ* by EG White**
- **A Prayer Focus**

As we read and reflect on the daily devotions, let us seek to prayerfully apply these powerful lessons to our lives. For an even richer experience, you may want to take time in your personal devotional life to make a thorough study of *Steps to Christ* during these 40 days!

Let us also take time each day to pray for those specifically listed in the “Prayer Focus” for that particular day:

1. Let us pray for the ministry in that area/entity of the Cape Conference.
2. Let us pray that each of the session delegates from those particular districts/entities will be fully surrendered to God, will be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s guidance and will be used as God’s instruments at our upcoming Conference Business Session.

We pray that you, your church and others who receive the daily devotions will be drawn closer to Christ and will experience (or perhaps, re-experience) the transforming power of the gospel in your lives!

As the Holy Spirit directs, please feel free to pass on the daily devotion to others as well.

² The Daily Devotions have been prepared by Pastors D Grigg and F van Tonder.

1 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 1)

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. (John 1:18 NKJV)

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice, - one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p10)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Cape Conference Administration

2 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 2)

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29 NKJV)

Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His relationships with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, which refused to receive Him, the way, the truth, and the life. They had rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness. His life was one of self - denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p12)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Cape Conference Executive Committee

3 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 3)

***Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
(1 John 3:1 NKJV)***

The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father's love toward the perishing race, he was filled with adoration and reverence; and, failing to find suitable language in which to express the greatness and tenderness of this love, he called upon the world to behold it. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name "sons of God." (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p15)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Cape Conference Directors

4 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 4)

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day. (Genesis 1:31 NKJV)

Man was originally endowed with noble powers and a well - balanced mind. He was perfect in his being, and in harmony with God. His thoughts were pure, his aims holy. But through disobedience, his powers were perverted, and selfishness took the place of love. His nature became so weakened through transgression that it was impossible for him, in his own strength, to resist the power of evil. He was made captive by Satan, and would have remained so forever had not God specially interposed. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p17)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Cape Conference Head Office

5 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 5)

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:6-8 NKJV)

It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Job 14:4; Romans 8:7. Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p18)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Cape Conference Eastern Region Office

6 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 6)

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16 NKJV)

Shall we not regard the mercy of God? What more could He do? Let us place ourselves in right relation to Him who has loved us with amazing love. Let us avail ourselves of the means provided for us that we may be transformed into His likeness, and be restored to fellowship with the ministering angels, to harmony and communion with the Father and the Son. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p22)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Cape Conference Northern Region Office

7 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 7)

19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21 NKJV)

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. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p23)

The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. He longed for the joy of holiness - to be restored to harmony and communion with God...

A repentance such as this, is beyond the reach of our own power to accomplish; it is obtained only from Christ... (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p24, 25)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Cape Conference Western Region Office

8 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 8)

His own iniquities entrap the wicked man,

And he is caught in the cords of his sin. (Proverbs 5:22 NKJV)

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. What we do not overcome, will overcome us and work out our destruction. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p32)

Every act of transgression, every neglect or rejection of the grace of Christ, is reacting upon yourself; it is hardening the heart, depraving the will, benumbing the understanding, and not only making you less inclined to yield, but less capable of yielding, to the tender pleading of God's Holy Spirit. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p33)

Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire, persistently cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. Every sinful indulgence strengthens the soul's aversion to God. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p34)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Advent District served by Pastor G Solontsi
- Albany District served by Pastor AJ Gouws

9 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 9)

Create in me a clean heart, O God,

And renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10 NKJV)

Many accept an intellectual religion, a form of godliness, when the heart is not cleansed. Let it be your prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10. Deal truly with your own soul. Be as earnest, as persistent, as you would be if your mortal life were at stake. This is a matter to be settled between God and your own soul, settled for eternity. A supposed hope, and nothing more, will prove your ruin. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p35)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Albany Coastal District served by Pastor SS Tyutyu
- Albany Inland District served by Pastor Z Ludaka

10 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 10)

41 *"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"*

43 *Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." (Luke 7:41-43 NKJV)*

We have been great sinners, but Christ died that we might be forgiven. The merits of His sacrifice are sufficient to present to the Father in our behalf. Those to whom He has forgiven most will love Him most, and will stand nearest to His throne to praise Him for His great love and infinite sacrifice. It is when we most fully comprehend the love of God that we best realize the sinfulness of sin. When we see the length of the chain that was let down for us, when we understand something of the infinite sacrifice that Christ has made in our behalf, the heart is melted with tenderness and contrition. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p35)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Algoa District served by Pastors PT Buwa and X Funde
- Barkley Hope District served by Pastor R Khahlana

11 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 11)

16 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 NKJV)

True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be as publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p38)

Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p39)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Boland One District served by Pastor E Elstadt
- Boland Two District served by Pastor A Ranana

12 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 12)

12 Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

13 And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:12, 13 NKJV)

The spirit of self - justification originated in the father of lies and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit and will not be acceptable to God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy. Like the poor publican, not lifting up so much as his eyes unto heaven, he will cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and those who do acknowledge their guilt will be justified, for Jesus will plead His blood in behalf of the repentant soul. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p40)

The examples in God's word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin or attempt at self - justification. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p41)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Breede Rivier District served by Pastor J Jooste
- Butterworth District served by Pastors X Swartz and O Pakade

13 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 13)

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

The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness. By nature we are alienated from God. The Holy Spirit describes our condition in such words as these: "Dead in trespasses and sins;" "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;" "no soundness in it." We are held fast in the snare of Satan, "taken captive by him at his will." Ephesians 2:1; Isaiah 1:5, 6; 2 Timothy 2:26. God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p43)

The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, requires a struggle; but the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p43)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Butterworth West District served by Pastor K Songwiqui
- Central Peninsula 1 District served by Pastors M Ndayi and S Duma

14 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 14)

"Come now, and let us reason together,"

Says the Lord,

"Though your sins are like scarlet,

They shall be as white as snow;

Though they are red like crimson,

They shall be as wool. (Isaiah 1:18 NKJV)

The government of God is not, as Satan would make it appear, founded upon a blind submission, an unreasoning control. It appeals to the intellect and the conscience. "Come now, and let us reason together" is the Creator's invitation to the beings He has made. Isaiah 1:18. God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton. Such is not the purpose of the Creator. He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p43)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Central Peninsula 2 District served by Pastor S Jakavula
- Central Peninsula 3 District served by Pastors P Stander and A Beaton

15 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 15)

For the Lord God is a sun and shield;

The Lord will give grace and glory;

No good thing will He withhold

From those who walk uprightly. (Psalm 84:11 NKJV)

God does not require us to give up anything that it is for our best interest to retain. In all that He does, He has the well - being of His children in view. Would that all who have

not chosen Christ might realize that He has something vastly better to offer them than they are seeking for themselves. Man is doing the greatest injury and injustice to his own soul when he thinks and acts contrary to the will of God. No real joy can be found in the path forbidden by Him who knows what is best and who plans for the good of His creatures. The path of transgression is the path of misery and destruction. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p46)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Chigonjetso District served by Pastor S Banda
- Drakensberg District served by Pastor X Mabenge

16 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 16)

14 "Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! 15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:14, 15 NKJV)

Many are inquiring, "How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?" You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p47)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Dutywa District served by Pastor S Singata
- East Griqualand 1 District served by Pastor E Ndaba

17 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 17)

8 Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." 9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

And that day was the Sabbath." (John 5:8 NKJV)

From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty - eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The sick man might have said, "Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word." But, no, he believed Christ's word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he willed to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.

In like manner you are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You believe that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You will to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise, - believe that you are forgiven and cleansed, - God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p50, 51)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- East Griqualand 2 District served by Pastor B Matikinca
- East London District served by Pastors D Grigg & F van Tonder

18 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 18)

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

Jesus says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. There is a condition to this promise - that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,

who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p51)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- East London Coastal District served by Pastors TPY Rojie and S Kotela
- East London Inland District served by Pastor B Njingolo

19 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 19)

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him... (Colossians 2:6 NKJV)

Now that you have given yourself to Jesus, do not draw back, do not take yourself away from Him, but day by day say, "I am Christ's; I have given myself to Him;" and ask Him to give you His Spirit and keep you by His grace. As it is by giving yourself to God, and believing Him, that you become His child, so you are to live in Him. The apostle says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Colossians 2:6. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p52)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- East Pondoland District served by Pastors MH Gumede and S Kheswa
- Eastern Peninsula 1 District served by Pastor A Mputa

20 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 20)

We love Him because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19 NKJV)

The loveliness of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. It was His delight to do the will of God. Love to God, zeal for His glory, was the controlling power in our Saviour's life. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions. Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns. "We love, because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19, R.V. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p59)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Emboland District served by Pastor D Ntuli

- Flagstaff District served by Pastor Z Mditshwa

21 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 21)

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10 NKJV)

There are two errors against which the children of God - particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace - especially need to guard. The first, already dwelt upon, is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy.

The opposite and no less dangerous error is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption.

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, "I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Hebrews 10:16. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience - the service and allegiance of love - is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John 5:3; 2:4. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience.

We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith... (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p59-61)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- George District served by Pastors J Jonker and E Carolus

- Glen Grey District served by Pastors VJ Nono and S Poswa

22 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 22)

...it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13 NKJV)

If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p62)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Gordonia District served by Pastors M Furstenburg and J Julies (Jnr)
- Hantam District served by Pastor K Britz

23 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 23)

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3 ESV)

Not all the wisdom and skill of man can produce life in the smallest object in nature. It is only through the life which God Himself has imparted, that either plant or animal can live. So it is only through the life from God that spiritual life is begotten in the hearts of men. Unless a man is "born from above," he cannot become a partaker of the life which Christ came to give. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p66)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Helderberg Basin 1 District served by Pastor P Dalbock
- Helderberg Basin 2 District served by Pastor J Sterley

24 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 24)

"...my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." (John 6:32, 33 ESV)

In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p68)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Karoo District served by Pastors MJ Mvulo and S Viljoen
- Khamfu (South East Peninsula 3) District served by Pastor SR Rengqe

25 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 25)

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5 ESV)

Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him,—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p69)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Kimberley District served by Pastors S Viljoen and K Petersen
- King Williams Town District served by Pastors T Biyana and Z Ntshiza

26 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 26)

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. (Colossians 3:23, 24 ESV)

God might have committed the message of the gospel, and all the work of loving ministry, to the heavenly angels. He might have employed other means for accomplishing His purpose. But in His infinite love He chose to make us co-workers with Himself, with Christ and the angels, that we might share the blessing, the joy, the spiritual uplifting, which results from this unselfish ministry. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p80)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Knysna District served by Pastor SJ Zito

- Kouga District served by Pastor M Gwala

27 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 27)

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. (1 Peter 2:2, 3 ESV)

The spirit of unselfish labor for others gives depth, stability, and Christlike loveliness to the character, and brings peace and happiness to its possessor. The aspirations are elevated. There is no room for sloth or selfishness. Those who thus exercise the Christian graces will grow and will become strong to work for God. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p81)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Langkloof District served by Pastors G Jonck and A Niemandt
- Malifo District served by Pastors MB Shugu and L Moko

28 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 28)

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. – (Colossians 2:6-7 ESV)

You are not to wait for great occasions or to expect extraordinary abilities before you go to work for God. You need not have a thought of what the world will think of you. If your daily life is a testimony to the purity and sincerity of your faith, and others are convinced that you desire to benefit them, your efforts will not be wholly lost. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p85)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Maluti District served by Pastor A Nyabali
- Matzikama District served by Pastor R Oliphant

29 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 29)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. – (Revelation 21:1-2 ESV)

As your senses delight in the attractive loveliness of the earth, think of the world that is to come, that shall never know the blight of sin and death; where the face of nature will no more wear the shadow of the curse. Let your imagination picture the home of the saved, and remember that it will be more glorious than your brightest imagination can portray. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p87)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Mhlontlo District served by Pastors D Ntuli and B Camagu
- Midlands District served by Pastors K Mbangani and V Dube

30 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 30)

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18 ESV)

As we meditate upon the perfections of the Saviour, we shall desire to be wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. There will be a hungering and thirsting of soul to become like Him whom we adore. The more our thoughts are upon Christ, the more we shall speak of Him to others and represent Him to the world. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p89)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Mossel Bay District served by Pastor H Botha
- Motherwell District served by Pastor K Tyatya

31 OCTOBER 2018 (DAY 31)

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Matthew 13:45-46 ESV)

As the miner discovers veins of precious metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will he who perseveringly searches the word of God as for hid treasure and truths of the greatest value, which are concealed from the view of the careless seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as streams owing from the fountain of life. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p91)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Mthatha District served by Pastor O Ngaleka
- Namaqualand District served by Pastor K Britz

1 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 32)

Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints... (Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

In order to commune with God, we must have something to say to Him concerning our actual life. Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p94)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- North West Suburbs District served by Pastors D Potgieter and JE Tumpkin
- Northern Peninsula 1 District served by Pastors RA Zeeman and G Claasen

2 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 33)

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. (Zephaniah 3:17 ESV)

Through sincere prayer we are brought into connection with the mind of the Infinite. We may have no remarkable evidence at the time that the face of our Redeemer is bending over us in compassion and love, but this is even so. We may not feel His visible touch, but His hand is upon us in love and pitying tenderness. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p97)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Northern Peninsula 2 District served by Pastors NW Carolus and C Liebrandt
- Northern Suburbs District served by Pastors R Stander and AJ de Villiers

3 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 34)

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 7:1 ESV)

Although there may be a tainted, corrupted atmosphere around us, we need not breathe its miasma, but may live in the pure air of heaven. We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessing of God will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth and will have constant communion with heaven. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p100)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Oudtshoorn District served by Pastors M Cupido and L Makombe
- Overberg District served by Pastors H Naude and CP Neuhoff

4 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 35)

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. (2 Peter 1:16 ESV)

God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p107)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Peddie East District served by Pastor PZ Fobe
- Peddie West District served by Pastor L Peter

5 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 36)

***Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
For by it the people of old received their commendation. (Hebrews 11:1-2 ESV)***

The word of God, like the character of its divine Author, presents mysteries that can never be fully comprehended by finite beings. The entrance of sin into the world, the incarnation of Christ, regeneration, the resurrection, and many other subjects presented in the Bible, are mysteries too deep for the human mind to explain, or even fully to comprehend. But we have no reason to doubt God's word because we cannot understand the mysteries of His providence. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p108)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Port Elizabeth 1 & 2 District served by Pastors A Niemandt and A Visser
- Port Elizabeth Central District served by Pastor B Laing

6 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 37)

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11 ESV)

There is an evidence that is open to all,—the most highly educated, and the most illiterate,—the evidence of experience. God invites us to prove for ourselves the reality of His word, the truth of His promises. He bids us “taste and see that the Lord is good.” Psalm 34:8. Instead of depending upon the word of another, we are to taste for ourselves. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p114)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Port Elizabeth North District served by Pastors T Nyngwashe and MM Sojola
- Sivukudza (Eastern Peninsula 2) District served by Pastor M Lamani

7 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 38)

For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life... (2 Corinthians 2:15-16 ESV)

In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ's follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p116)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Southern Peninsula 1 District served by Pastor DG Harwood

- Southern Suburbs 1 District served by Pastor A Otto

8 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 39)

You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. (2 Corinthians 3:2-3 ESV)

Angels are listening to hear what kind of report you are bearing to the world about your heavenly Master. Let your conversation be of Him who liveth to make intercession for you before the Father. When you take the hand of a friend, let praise to God be on your lips and in your heart. This will attract his thoughts to Jesus. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p120)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Southern Suburbs 2 District served by Pastor B Hartnick
- Swartland District served by Pastor A Alexander

9 NOVEMBER 2018 (DAY 40)

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. (Philippians 2:4 ESV)

There is many a brave soul sorely pressed by temptation, almost ready to faint in the conflict with self and with the powers of evil. Do not discourage such a one in his hard struggle. Cheer him with brave, hopeful words that shall urge him on his way. Thus the light of Christ may shine from you. "None of us liveth to himself." Romans 14:7. By our unconscious influence others may be encouraged and strengthened, or they may be discouraged, and repelled from Christ and the truth. (EG White, *Steps to Christ*, p121)

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Uitenhage District served by Pastor M Ndevu
- West Coast District served by Pastor W Claasen

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETINGS/CELL GROUPS³

As we prepare for the upcoming Conference Business Session in November 2018, local Church Prayer Meetings and Cell Groups are encouraged (1) to consider and reflect on God's purpose and mission for His Church on earth and (2) to pray that we as His church in the Cape Conference may fulfil His purpose and accomplish His mission for us as a church.

To aid the weekly prayer meetings/cell groups, we have prepared a special programme for each weekly prayer meeting/cell group during the 40 Days of Prayer. Each programme includes:

- (1) A short sermon
- (2) Biblical passages/concepts for consideration
- (3) Points for discussion/reflection
- (4) Prayer pointers

Please feel free to use the elements of the programme outlined above in ways that will suit your local church.

We desire that the short sermon, the Biblical passages/concepts for consideration and the points for discussion/reflection are to be used in such a way as to provide a foundation and focus to your prayer time. In your planning of the weekly prayer meeting/cell group, therefore, we would encourage you to set aside sufficient time for prayer! In this regard, the prayer pointers each week will be a blessing.

We would suggest the following general outline for a one-hour prayer meeting/cell group:

- Welcome & Opening Prayer (2 minutes)
- Singing (8 minutes)
- Sermon (15 minutes)
- Points for discussion/reflection (10 minutes)
- Prayer time (20 minutes)
- Song (4 minutes)
- Closing Prayer (1 minute)

For more information, please see "United Prayer Pointers" (p51).

³ The Weekly Prayer Meeting/Cell Group Sermons have been prepared by Pastor JA Gouws.

SERMON: WHY A BODY OF BELIEVERS?

INTRODUCTION

Why did God, through His infinite wisdom, see the need for a human agency – the Church – to carry out His will, His mission, on earth?

Have you ever wondered about this question? Looking at the historical injustices committed in the name of God's Church, and how many injustices are still committed in this name today, how do we reconcile it? How do we make sense of it? Do you remember being taught in your baptismal class that your salvation is not dependent on the church that you belong to (membership in the SDA Church), or the family that you happen to be born into (third generation Adventist), but a personal relationship with Jesus? I remember thinking: "If it is a personal relationship with Jesus that saves us, why is it necessary to belong to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, or any other church for that matter?"

GOD CALLED A BODY OF BELIEVERS

When we study the Word of God, we find clear indication that the very foundation for us gathered here tonight as a body of believers, is God's doing. Our contribution is a response to the leading and the initiative of God. Consider the following images Bible writers, under the inspiration of God, employed to describe this initiative of God:

- Christ's Fold: John 10:16
- The Body of Christ: Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:24
- Flock of God: Ezekiel 34:15; 1 Peter 5:2
- The Household of God: Ephesians 2:19
- God's Family: Ephesians 3:15
- The Lamb's Bride/Wife: Ephesians 5:22-32; Revelation 19:7-9; Revelation 21:9; Revelation 22:17

Nowhere in any of these images do we find church leaders claiming any part of the Church for themselves. In fact, the effort is consciously made, through the ever-inspiring Holy Spirit, to draw all attention to the fact: This is God's Church. He is the good Shepherd. He is the Head. He is the Bridegroom.

How does an organized Church fit into this picture?

The expression “form follows function” would serve well to explain. We establish forms to achieve desired functions. An example will be to create a chair (Form) to sit comfortably (Function). God established a church (Form) to achieve His Mission (Function). Do we understand this concept, or have we fallen into the trap of forms dictating function? It is important to know that a form is only useful when it achieves the function it was created to achieve. A chair cannot function as a mode of transport, when it was created to be furniture. It becomes useless when form does not follow its intended function. If you first started creating a chair not knowing what for, and when you finished you want to travel from George to Bloemfontein, the chair will not help.

From this example it becomes clear that God had a goal, a function that needed to be done, and He created or established a form to reach this function: the Organized Body of Believers. The question then begs an answer: What is the function of the Church?

BIBLICAL PASSAGES/CONCEPTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Genesis 12:3 – To be a blessing.
- Acts 7:38 – Teaching the living Words.
- Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11; 4:11-15; 5:23-27 – Living representation of God’s character on earth.
- Matthew 15:13-16; 6:13-20; 18:18; 28:19,20 – Spreading the Gospel by being relevant.
- Colossians 1:17, 18 – Establishing the Eternal Kingdom’s principles of Justice and Mercy.
- 2 Corinthians 5:20 – Ambassadors for Christ.
- 1 Peter 2:4-12 – A Royal Priesthood (function), set aside for a special purpose/function – ministering to God’s children (all of them) through service.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

- **Why a body of believers?** Because, God chose to work with humanity by initiating (calling), sustaining (blessing) and ultimately completing (fetching) His mission through the church. It is the greatest honour that God could have bestowed upon humanity.
- **For us to have daily communion with the King of kings, Lord of lords, should we not prioritize God’s mission when we gather at the coming Cape Conference Business Session (Form) to fulfil our purpose of reaching lost souls (Function)?** We pray that every church will realise their role to play in achieving this function. Amen.

PRAYER POINTERS

PRAISE

- We can praise God that He has instituted a body of believers for a special purpose at this time in earth's history.
- We can praise God that He has given us the means to achieve our mandate as a Church.
- We can praise God for His love for His Church and His special care for His Church.
- We can praise God for the awesome privilege of being instruments in His mighty Hands.

CONFESSION

- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness for times when we do things in Church for our own glory – and not for the glory of God (Ephesians 3:20-21).
- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness when we seek our own worldly ambitions in God's Church instead of seeking to fulfil the mission He has given His Church.

SUPPLICATION

- We can earnestly pray that God will allow us to understand fully our function as a Church and to make sure we accomplish the task that was set out before us, by His Grace.

SERMON: WHAT TYPE OF CHURCH ARE WE?

INTRODUCTION

Exodus 3:12-15

¹² And He said, “Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.”

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.” (NASB)

“In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” (EG White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p196)

Have you ever noticed how the stories we read in the Bible, more often than not, address three important aspects of our existence as humanity: Past, Present and Future?

Past: Where am I coming from?

Present: What am I doing here?

Future: Where am I heading too?

MOSES AT THE BURNING BUSH

Let us take, for example, the story of Moses (Exodus 3), where God speaks to Moses. As God starts speaking from the burning bush, He tells Moses who it is that is speaking to him. He makes mention of the past in v. 6, the present in v.7 and the future in v.8. He

firstly states that He is the God that was present in the Past, leading Moses' forefathers. He then tells Moses that He is hearing the cries of His children. This shows that He is in the present with them. He hears their cries in the moment that they are cried. He does not read about them. He does not watch a recording of them. He hears them as they are crying.

It is interesting the way God choses to dialog with Moses. Why would He choose this way of a burning bush? And why would He allow Moses to ask questions and entertain Moses' reluctancy with answering the questions and even convincing Moses without striking him down with lightning for being so reluctant? Do you not think that it was to illustrate that He is present? We get the sense that Moses and God's children did not feel God's presence. So, God is now conversing with His child, as a loving father would do, not through someone else, but personally. God is patient and answers the questions that Moses has.

However, He does not leave it there. God gives Moses instruction with the authority to carry out the mandate that was given to him.

Furthermore, He shares what He has planned for the Israelites. He gives Hope by pointing them to the Future, which He just so happens to know – "*I am who I am*". By sharing with Moses the promise that was made to Abraham, and re-assuring Moses that there is a Future, God gives *Hope*. He tells him that this very mountain will be the place where they will worship God soon. He even reveals to Moses, through the rod turning into the snake and his hand getting leprosy and then getting healed, that He is in control of the future. He knew the challenges that would face the Israelites, however, He gives them the ability to face and overcome the challenges. He shows the way before they even came to the crossroads. This shows that God is in control! Praise God! He will walk with Moses, and as we read on, with the Israelites, every step of the way. More than walking with them, He leads them every step of the way. This truth of a present God who has been there in the past and who will be there in our future, makes the present meaningful.

Our question, looking towards the Cape Conference Business Session of 2018, would be: Are we allowing God, who is the *I Am*, to lead us and are we following His instructions faithfully? Are we listening to His instructions in the *Living Word* and the *Spirit of Prophecy*? When Jesus was about to be translated, He gave clear instruction of where His presence will be:

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**” (NASB)

As a church gathering for prayer, may it be a prayer that takes off our shoes and brings us into the holy Presence of God. He is here. Allow Him to lead us.

OTHER EXAMPLES

There are many more examples from the Bible that illustrate the faithful leading of our God. The golden thread that runs through the Bible shows God to be actively involved in humanity’s journey towards eternity. It also shows that God is actively involved in leading something special: *A Prophetic Movement*.

Tracing God’s activity from Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, the Jews, the Apostles, the Early Christian Church, the Martyrs, the Reformation, 1844 and the Great Disappointment, the Seventh-day Adventist Church Pioneers, the World Wide Mission, we get a clear understanding of God’s leading. He is leading a Movement that is destined for the blessed Hope. He has not abandoned His mission. In fact, He has expanded it and equipped this expansion with the ability to reach every nation, tribe, tongue and people.

We are a movement that is led by the “*I Am.*”

Jeremiah 29:11-13 tells us in no uncertain terms that God has a plan for us. The Cape Conference Business Session should not be something that we see as an election conference, but rather a further fulfilment of God’s plans for His movement. Every single delegate that is sent by a local church is to realize that they have not been sent by man, but they have encountered a burning bush. Through the prayerful election done by the body of Christ, a special purpose has been given to them that will look to the past for assurance, inform the present of God’s leading, and move the children of God closer to the future fulfilment of Christ’s Return.

MOVEMENT REQUIRES MOVING

The definition of “movement” reveals that we are a group of Believers that are moving together to accomplish *Missio Dei* (God’s Mission), which is our function as a Body of Believers. Has this Church allowed for the working of the Holy Spirit? Are we listening to the voice of God? Are we looking for the footsteps of Jesus? Are we resting in the shadow of the Almighty? God is calling this church to Move! The best thing about this “Movement” is that Jesus Christ, Lord of Past, Present and Future, is our leader – the “*I*

Am.” He has been leading this *church* from the foundation of the world and will continue to lead it. The history of our Movement testifies to the leading of God⁴. Our present movement testifies to God’s presence. However, a lack of movement testifies to our lack of trust in the Mover! As the church kneels to pray this evening, ask God to become the center of everything we do as a Church. Jesus Christ is waiting to take us to be where He is. Praise God, our Future, that we are moving towards, is assured because of our Leader moving us towards it in the present, Amen!

BIBLICAL PASSAGES/CONCEPTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Jeremiah 29:11-13
- Psalm 32:8; 37:23; 119:105
- Isaiah 30:21; 43:1-6
- John 10:3-5; 16:13
- Romans 8:28
- Hebrews 13:21

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

- How does the history of the SDA Church confirm our “Label” as a Movement?
- Being part of the Movement led by Jesus Christ, are you familiar with the destination?
- Discuss characteristics of the SDA Movement and how it impacts those around it?
- Reflect on the Mission of the Movement and the pace at which it is moving. How are you contributing?

PRAYER POINTERS

PRAISE

- We can praise God for His faithfulness in leading His Church throughout history.
- We can praise God for leading His Movement and not leaving it to sinful humanity.
- We can praise God for His love for His Church and His special care for His Church.

⁴ See the “Further Study” section for more information.

CONFESSION

- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness for times when we do things in Church for our own glory – and not for the glory of God (Ephesians 3:20-21).
- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness when we seek our own worldly ambitions in God's Church instead of seeking to fulfil the mission He has given His Church.
- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness for times when we look towards others to do something God has called us to do.

SUPPLICATION

- We pray for an understanding of how God has led His people throughout history and how He has used them in accomplishing His mission in their period of history.
- We earnestly and humbly seek the Will of God for our lives and ask Him to reveal His plan for us in fulfilling His Mission.

FURTHER STUDY

- <http://www.adventist.org/information/history/article/go/0/united-for-mission-one-hundred-and-fifty-years/>
- <http://www.adventist.org/information/history/>
- Froom, L. E. (1971). *Movement of Destiny*. Washington DC: Review and Herald.
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SERMON: WHAT IS OUR LABEL?

INTRODUCTION

1 Peter 4:16

¹⁶ “but if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.” (NASB)

Christian, Protestant, Catholic, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Reformed, and the list goes on and on. These are labels/names that we give groups that describe their main characteristic. It gives us a summary of their focus or reason for being. It does not mean that there are no other identifying traits. It merely means that this is the one that could be described as the overarching glue binding them together. Within these groups you could even break it down further, but they fall under the major label. Most of the time, labels/identifying marks are not chosen, but bestowed upon, meaning that those on the outside look inside and say: This is who they are – Christians, as was the case in the early Christian Movement (Acts 11:26). It is no wonder then that you come across interesting labels when talking about “Seventh-day Adventist,” as people looking on tend to give the label.

This evening, we would have to ask: Should there be neutral observers at the coming Cape Conference Business Session – what label would be given to describe us? What would they see as the glue that binds us together? What would they say is the focus that identifies us?

What would be our “label”?

- Followers of Christ?
- A prophetic voice in the wilderness?
- People with a Mission?

Or

- Political party?
- Lovers of self?
- Hypocrites?

Receiving a label that identifies our mission of preaching the Gospel could only be given should our conduct, decisions and atmosphere at the Session, reflect this. Peter tells the

early Christians that the name *Christian* as an identifying mark should be embraced. It literally means that the action that was taken against you was because of the way that you conducted yourself, a follower of Christ. You conduct justifies the label – follower of Christ, and you should glory in it. Could we glory in the labels given to us?

A LABEL FOR US

Let us imagine that what we do and what we say inspires the observers to label us as a *Prophetic Movement*. How would our conduct have to look like to warrant such a label?

Let us look at it very basically. We know that a prophet is someone who teaches the will of God, not by their own choice, but by the call of God and under the inspiration of God. So, to be a *Prophetic Movement* would imply that we as a Church need to be teachers of God's Will and do so out of a call received from God in the manner ordained by God. The label also implies that the *Prophetic Movement* is part of God's will, carried out on this earth. It would mean that our Session needs to move the church closer to the prophetic word received for the specific time to which this movement was called - Revelation 14:6-20. Our decisions need to reflect the purpose of God choosing a people to be a *Prophetic Movement*:

¹¹ **“For the grace of God** has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, ¹³ **looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,** ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.” (Titus 2:11-14 NASB).

As Seventh-day Adventists, our “label” is something to be proud of – something which reveals our Past, Present, and Future. It reveals our purpose, God's Mission, and what we are looking forward to, our Hope:

¹⁸ And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20 NASB)

We know that as a *Prophetic Movement*, we have a special message that accompanies the special time that we find ourselves in. As a Church we recognize the fulfilment of prophecy within our lifetime, and Jesus encouraged us to look out for the “*birth pains*” (Matthew 24:8 NIV) that will signal: “the end is near.” Therefore, accompanying this

great privilege of being God's children and carrying a label worthy of God's Glory, we need to realize that we have a huge responsibility upon our shoulders. We need to carry out the will of God (John 6:39-40) on this earth, for Lo, the time is short!

IN SUMMARY

1. We have a Mandate: Reaching every soul with the Gospel Message (Matthew 28:18-20)
2. We have a special Message for a special time in History: Three Angels Message (Revelation 14:6-12)
3. We are Mission-orientated: Everything we ought to do is to be focused on carrying out our Mandate (Matthew 24:14)

BIBLICAL PASSAGES/CONCEPTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Titus 2:11-14
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Mathew 24:8-14
- John 6:39-40
- Revelation: 14:6-12

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

- How Mission-orientated are you?
- Discuss how your family can become missionaries. Do you need to travel around the world to be part of God's Mission?
- Reflect on the idea that becoming a child of God and a member of His body automatically places a responsibility of Mission upon your shoulders. Why do you think God would allow this?
- Reflect on the significance of Revelation 12:11 and discuss the part that testifying about Christ plays in the salvation process.
- Ask what labels have been given to us, and how we can change our ways to receive a label worthy of God's glory?

PRAYER POINTERS

PRAISE

- We can praise God for giving us the opportunity to be instruments in His hands.

- We can praise God for revealing to us His will and the encouragement that it gives us. The fact that God will never give up on us is comforting and it inspires us.
- We can praise God for His love for His Church and His special care for His Church.

CONFESSION

- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness for our sins, especially those that we have committed against Him.
- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness for becoming distracted from our Mandate of saving souls.
- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness for becoming distracted from sharing the everlasting gospel in the context of the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14.
- We can humbly seek God's forgiveness for times when we rejected the calling of the Holy Spirit to reach out to someone.

SUPPLICATION

- We earnestly and humbly pray for God to give us a thorough understanding and personal experience of the gospel.
- We earnestly and humbly pray for God to help us understand and share the everlasting gospel in the context of Three Angels' Messages of Revelation.
- We earnestly and humbly seek the Will of God for our lives personally and ask Him to reveal His plan for us in fulfilling His Mission.

FURTHER STUDY

- https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Church_of_Jesus_Christ_0.pdf
- https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Last_Message_for_this_World.pdf
- White, E. G. (1948). *Testimonies for the Church*, p.247 (Vol. 8). Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association.
- White, E.G (1940). *Desire of Ages*, p. 818-828. Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

SERMON: JESUS IS WITH US

INTRODUCTION

In the last couple of weeks, we have established the very important role that we have within God's Divine Will on earth. In His infinite wisdom, He has chosen to use weak, mortal human beings to carry out His powerful everlasting Gospel. Wow! What an awesome privilege to have as humanity.

However, do we realize this great purpose? And if we truly comprehend the greatness of the task at hand, why are we so reluctant to spread the Gospel message? Friends, God has called ALL of us to be part of this great work. We are the Disciples of Jesus Christ and we are called Christians. This is a label that should not be used lightly. When we call ourselves Christians, there is a certain responsibility that we agree to carry. There is a certain lifestyle that accompanies a follower of Jesus Christ: Jesus gave a clear mission to His followers – A very CLEAR, STRONG, URGENT commission: Matthew 28:16-20.

We refer to this portion of Scripture as the "Great Commission." Now, a simple question that needs to be asked is: "As a Christian, or Disciple of Christ, is it possible to reject His teaching or marginalize His instruction and still be called a Christian?" The answer is a stern "NO!" You cannot work for a political party and, when voting comes, you choose not to vote and even worse, vote for the opposition and support the policies of the opposition.

Matthew 28:16-20 is the clearest mandate that we can receive from Christ as to what is expected from those who carry His name. There were some theologians that advocated that this portion of scripture was added many years after the book of Matthew was written. One such author was Mr. Adolf von Harnack who wrote "*The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*."⁵ In the very first edition of this book he reached this conclusion. However, after spending time within the Word of God and reading this passage again and again, he came to another conclusion in his fourth edition. He wrote: "*It is impossible to say anything greater and more than this in only forty words.*"⁶

⁵ Harnack, 1908, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*.

⁶ Harnack as quoted by GH Anderson in *Fullness of Life for All: Challenges for Mission in Early 21st Century*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, p17

Thousands of theologians, scholars, Bible students and ordinary Bible readers have come to the same conclusion: “This is our Mandate as Disciples of Jesus Christ.” You are called to carry out this great Mission that Christ has left with us. When we read this passage we also receive a glimpse, a revelation, of the God we serve.

More than giving us an awesome work to do, He has given us the four A’s of Matthew 28:16-20:

1. “**All Authority**” – God does not send us without backing us. What use is it to send an ambassador to another country to represent your country’s interests but the person who sends you does not have any authority to back up the demands? It will be madness. However, our God, our Teacher, our Instructor, has ALL Authority on this earth and in Heaven. He is the King of the Universe and empowers His followers to do what He has asked them to do!
2. “**All Nations**” – Within the Kingdom of God, all are equal. There is no one race or people that have a higher claim than any another. As followers of Christ we have no right to pick and choose who we want to tell about the Gospel. ALL people, races, nations, tongues, sizes, shapes, sexual orientations, religious convictions are to be reached out to with the Gospel truth. We need to go to ALL the Nations. The Gospel can transcend any and every barrier that has resulted from Sin! It is Powerful. It is Transforming. It is “the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18 NASB).
3. “**Teach to Observe All**” – Friends, what God has taught us, through His Word, should be what we are teaching. And further than teaching, we should live out the example of obedience to these Loving Instructions. The instruction from Jesus is: “Teach to Observe.” And the important word within this passage is “ALL.” We should be teaching a pure Truth undefiled by Satan’s tentacles that he is so cunningly wedging in everywhere. We should teach people about Jesus. He is the ONLY way to salvation. Jesus is Truth, and when we study our Bibles, which is “All that God has Commanded,” we will teach All Truth. In turn, people will observe “the power of God” within our lives (1 Corinthians 1:18 NASB) and be drawn to the feet of Jesus.
4. “**With you Always**” – We serve a God that is timeless but chooses to step into time, to be with us. He even set a period apart for His special presence: The Sabbath. We serve a God that could create a new Adam and Eve, Version 2.0, but chose to come to this earth as a human to set us free from Sin for Him to be with us. We serve a God that is without sin but chose to take the sin of all humanity upon Himself, so that we can be reconciled to Him (Romans 5:1). We serve a God

that longs for a meaningful relationship with His creation and will do everything for humanity to be where He is (John 14:1-3). God is with you Always!

Let me assure you that being a Christian is a great responsibility with a great Mission, but we serve a God that will enable us to stand strong under the banner of a “Follower of Jesus Christ.” Let us take pride in carrying this awesome title and know that each one of us has a great role to play in the spreading of the Gospel! Amen!

BIBLICAL PASSAGES/CONCEPTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Matthew 28:16-20
- John 14:1-3
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-27 (Especially verse 26-31)
- Romans 5:1-5

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

- Have you ever felt ashamed to be a Christian? How do you think God feels when He looks at how the term “being a Christian” is contaminated?
- Discuss how you could better live the example of a disciple of Jesus.
- Can you be a Disciple of Jesus and not follow the instruction of Matthew 28:16-20?
- Reflect upon 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 and ask yourself if God is able to use you? Share the reason for your answer, based on this passage.

PRAYER POINTERS

PRAISE

- We can praise God that He has provided His people with all authority, to go to all nations, to teach them to observe all things that He has commanded us, knowing that He will be with us all the way!
- We can praise God for giving us the opportunity to be instruments in His hands.
- We can praise God for being God with us.
- We can praise God for initiating our salvation and following through the good work that He started in us.

CONFESSION

- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for our sins, especially where we failed to live up to the title of “Christian.”
- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for not using the many opportunities to witness for Him that have come across our way.

SUPPLICATION

- We earnestly and humbly ask God to lead us to a fuller understanding of Truth and to live out the Instructions that He has taught us.

FURTHER STUDY

- White, E. G. (1940). *The Desire of Ages* (p. 19 - 26; Chapter: "God with us"). Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association.
- White, E. G. (1940). *The Desire of Ages* (p. 818 - 828; Chapter: "Go Teach All Nations"). Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

SERMON: SETTING GOALS AND SETTING OUT TO REACH THEM

INTRODUCTION

1 Corinthians 9:24

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.” (NASB)

Goal setting is one of the most effective ways of helping someone achieve a task that seemed impossible at first. Sometimes we look at the mountain in front of us and we lose hope of ever getting on the other side. However, through goal setting, you can break down the journey into smaller, far-more-achievable goals that ultimately help you achieve the main goal of cresting the mountain. It is a simple yet effective method.

However, what if you have set a goal for yourself? Take, for example, that you decided you want to get fit again. So, you set a goal of finishing the Comrades Marathon, one of the hardest endurance events on this planet. You decide that this is your goal for next year and you will set out to achieve this goal by making small lifestyle changes such as including regular exercise and healthy eating in your daily schedule.

You decide to wake-up an hour earlier in the morning to exercise. You decide that you are going to change your eating habits and you are going to join a team to motivate yourself to achieve your goal. By the end of the year you want to do your first half-marathon, and in March next year your first full Marathon.

You further proceed to work out a program according to the goals mentioned:

Day 1:

- Exercise: 05:00 am - Swim for an hour
- Meal: Chocolate Cake with 8 glasses of Carbonated Drink
- Team Exercise: Play Video games for two hours with your team.

Day 2:

- Exercise: 05:00 am – Cycle for an hour
- Meal: Fudge Toffee Ice Cream with sugar cones
- Team Exercise: Watch the Cricket together

Rest of the Week:

- Repeat Day 1 and Day 2.

Question: Will you be able to reach your goal without tailoring your activities towards your goal? You cannot expect to run a marathon and then you go about only exercising your upper body. It is very important to know what your goal is, but it is even more important to make sure you enable yourself to reach that goal. As a Church, we cannot be preaching evangelism, but not have the basic goal setting tailored to this purpose. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:24 that we should run as those who expect to win the race. Our actions and activities as a Church should be correlating with our Mission as a Church.

SPIRITUALLY SETTING GOALS

Why is it that we understand this within physical activities, but we fail to comprehend it when it comes to our spiritual walk? Over the past few weeks we have established, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that spreading the Gospel message far and wide is our goal! Should our activities not also reflect this?

We cannot begin to think that we will achieve this goal if all our activities are not Mission-orientated. We cannot simply rely on one aspect of our church activities to be Mission-orientated, but the rest of our lives are not in accordance with this mission. You cannot eat whatever you want and expect to finish the race with only exercise. For example, you cannot expect to “teach all nations” (Matthew 28:19 KJV) and only have the elder involved in evangelism. Every night the elder is doing Bible studies throughout the district, while the majority of members are busy watching their favourite dramas.

When we think about the goal that a Session seeks to achieve, our delegates should prepare themselves in a spiritual way as it is spiritual in nature. We cannot expect to do what we want, at the expense of spiritual preparation, and then be surprised when we miss the goal we set out to achieve. We need to tailor our lifestyle in accordance with the goal we seek to achieve.

One of our greatest desires as Christians, living in the end times, is the promise of the latter rain. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit like never before.

¹“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled

with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.” (Acts 2:1-4 NASB)

When we read the story at Pentecost, we see that the church gathered were of one accord. This meant that their actions and thoughts never lost sight of the promise given by Jesus of the coming *Paraclete*. Now that they were ready in unity and love, God the Holy Spirit could move freely amongst them and inspired them greatly – so much so that thousands were baptized.

All our efforts within the Church need to be Mission-orientated if we expect to “finish the race” (2 Timothy 4:7-8). That is how we will achieve our Goal!

BIBLICAL PASSAGES/CONCEPTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1 Timothy 4:8
- Philippians 3:13-14
- Matthew 6:19-21
- 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Colossians 3:17

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

- How can your church include every member in the church’s activities?
- Discuss how you could help ensure that your church is Mission-orientated and that they know the Goal they are pressing towards.
- How important do you think it will be for our leaders to have Mission-orientated leadership in motivating membership to reach our Ultimate Goal?

PRAYER POINTERS

PRAISE

- We can praise God for giving us the opportunity to be instruments in His hands.
- We can praise God for giving us clear instructions to follow when it comes to reaching the Goal He has set out for His Children.
- We can praise God for giving us counsel to follow for the time that we live in and for the Bible to be a source of comfort and instruction.
- We can be thankful to God for empowering us to achieve our Goal!

CONFESSION

- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness when our activities as a Church have not reflected our spiritual goals.
- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for our sins, especially where we have failed to live up to the title of “Christian.”
- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for our lethargic approach to spreading the Gospel.
- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for breaking down our leadership instead of supporting them and helping them to lead through the Grace of Christ.

SUPPLICATION

- We earnestly and humbly pray that our activities individually and corporately as the Church will reflect our spiritual goals of mission.
- We earnestly and humbly ask God to lead us to a fuller understanding of Truth and to live out the Instructions that He has given us.

FURTHER STUDY

- White, E. G. (1940). *Counsels on Stewardship* (p. 35 - 57). Hagerstown: Review and Herald Publishing Association.
- https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Edwards-Priesthood_of_believers.pdf

SERMON: WHAT ALLOWS US TO ACHIEVE THIS MISSION?

INTRODUCTION

I find the life of Peter fascinating and inspiring, especially as one can relate to the challenges he faced and how grace and mercy helped him to be a pillar in the spreading of the gospel message. It is a life that many of us can identify with, with its ups and downs. When we read about Peter we find him to be a very interesting character and it becomes clear that the way in which God chooses is far from the way we think He chooses.

PETER'S LIFE

A man who is willing to make impulsive decisions like walking on water but then doubts and starts to sink (John 6:19-20). Then we find Peter impulsively slashing off the ear of a man coming to capture Jesus, ready to take on a legion of soldiers and an angry mob for the sake of his Master (John 18:8). He professed with absolute certainty that he will never betray Jesus, just to betray Jesus a couple of hours later (John 13:38). He swears to such an extent that the people must conclude that this could not be the follower of Jesus Christ. His actions were so far removed from what they saw Jesus' teachings and actions were that they said to themselves: "This cannot be a disciple of Jesus." Even after Peter had been shown that he should not decide what man is worthy of the gospel and what man is not (Acts 10:34), Paul writes that he had to reprimand Peter at a certain time for showing favour to the Jewish Christians over the Gentile Christians (Galatians 2:11, 12).

This man was a sinner, but the grace of God changed him. Peter continued to put himself in situations that the Lord could use him. God was able to see Peter for who he is supposed to be, and by grace He was able to lead and direct Peter to a point where he became a leader of the early church. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), it was Peter whom God used to preach the Gospel to the salvation of thousands. Peter allowed God to use him. Peter placed himself in situations where God's grace could change him and allow him to preach the Gospel, as Peter himself had experienced this Gospel in his own life.

Therefore, he becomes a "someone" with whom all of us can identify. We have many character flaws and many times these get the better of us, but by allowing the Holy

Spirit to work within us, God's grace can also change us and empower us to preach this Gospel to the far ends of the earth. By the grace of God, the Cape Conference Business Session may become a fulfilment of the "Latter Rain." It might be the catalyst that sets the world on fire for Jesus Christ. Why do we not believe this? Let us pray that those who will be gathered in the "upper-room" will be of one accord as we allow the Holy Spirit to lead and direct our thoughts and actions. God wants to use us.

BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lastly, let us look again at Acts 2. We will witness something powerful. In the beginning of the chapter we find all the believers gathered in the upper room. The Bible teaches us that they were waiting and praying for the prophecy that Jesus foretold in Acts 1:4 to be fulfilled. They looked forward to the Gift that will come from the Father. We find in Acts 2:1-4 that what Jesus had promised came into fulfillment, and the Holy Spirit was poured out on the believers, who were now of one accord. The question then begs: Why was this done?

The answer can be found in the rest of the story of *The Acts of the Apostles* and subsequent *Epistles* within Scripture. This was not the fulfillment of what Jesus wanted them to be, no this was the beginning. They were equipped to carry out what He had tasked them to do in Matthew 28:18-20. When Jesus said all authority has been given unto him in Heaven and on Earth, this authority was now given to His followers to carry out the task that lay before them. One of the greatest examples of the power of the Holy Spirit is the life of Peter.

After the cursing and swearing at the crucifixion, Peter repented and accepted the call from Jesus. When this happened, He received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the same mouth that cursed but a few days earlier becomes the instrument of God and about three thousand give their lives to the Lord and are baptized (Acts 2:41). This is the power of the Holy Spirit, transforming sinful human beings into powerful instruments in God's hands. It becomes impossible for us to carry out the Mission without the indwelling Holy Spirit. We will only be cowering in buildings, meeting in secret, afraid to say "I am a Christian" if we did not have the Holy Spirit. However, this is not the case. "...we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:37 NKJV).

How do we accomplish the Mission of God? "*Then he said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts'*" (Zechariah 4:6 NASB). Peter was only able to preach the Gospel by the Power of the Holy Spirit. Church, we will only be able to carry forward the Gospel to the ends of the earth by the Power of the Holy Spirit. There is no other way. Let us therefore

confess, repent and be baptized by water and the Holy Spirit! Let us be Reformed and Revived!

BIBLICAL PASSAGES/CONCEPTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Acts 3:19
- Acts 2:38
- 1 John 1:8-10
- Acts 16:31-33
- John 3:5

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

- Contemplate upon the instruction given to us in Matthew 28:18-20 and discuss what encouragement we may receive from the words that Jesus uses. Look at “All Authority” (Matthew 28:18 NASB), “Go therefore” (Matthew 28:19 NASB), etc.
- How important do you think it will be for the Mission of the Church to have a session delegate that walks with God?
- Do you think, after reading Acts 1-2, that Unity amongst the believers was of paramount importance to the spreading of the Gospel? Look also at John 16-17 in your discussion.
- If Peter could go from cursing and swearing, betraying Jesus, to preaching and three thousand getting baptized, do you think there is hope for you and me? Should this not give us encouragement to become active partakers in the Gospel Ministry?

PRAYER POINTERS

PRAISE

- We can praise God for His mercy and grace in our lives, which is able to forgive us of our past transgressions and transform us into the people God desires us to be.
- We can praise God for giving us the opportunity to be instruments in His hands.
- We can praise God for giving us clear instructions to follow when it comes to reaching the Goal He has set out for His children.
- We can praise God for giving us counsel to follow for the time that we live in and for the Bible to be a source of comfort and instruction.
- We can be thankful to God for empowering us to achieve our Goal!

CONFESSION

- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for times when we’ve acted contrary to His will and character.
- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for our sins, especially where we have failed to live up to the title of “Christian.”
- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for our lethargic approach to spreading the Gospel.
- We can humbly seek God’s forgiveness for breaking down our leadership instead of supporting them and helping them to lead through the Grace of Christ.

SUPPLICATION

- We pray for the Holy Spirit’s Presence in our lives, without Whom we cannot overcome sin or fulfil the God-given Mission of the Church.
- We earnestly and humbly ask God to lead us in the way we go about preparing for the Cape Conference Business Session. May God reveal to us His will and may always our delegates be led by the Holy Spirit.

FURTHER STUDY

- <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/default/files/pdf/The%20Holy%20Spirit%200.pdf>
- <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/holy-spirit/images-holy-spirit-latter-rain>
- <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/theology-holy-spirit/spirit-filled>
- White, E. G. (2002). *Acts of the Apostles* (p. 35-46). Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

SPECIAL DAY OF PRAYER & FASTING

SABBATH, 6 OCTOBER 2018:

The 6th of October 2018 has been designated as a world Church special day of prayer and fasting. We invite you to participate!

For more information and resources, please see:

- <https://www.revivalandreformation.org/resources/all/prayer-and-fasting-days>
- [https://cdn.ministerialassociation.org/docs/prayer-and-fasting/2018Q4/2018_PrayerAndFasting_4th_Quarter_\(Rev.1\).zip](https://cdn.ministerialassociation.org/docs/prayer-and-fasting/2018Q4/2018_PrayerAndFasting_4th_Quarter_(Rev.1).zip)
- <https://www.revivalandreformation.org/>

As we seek the Lord in prayer on this special day of prayer and fasting, let us also remember our upcoming Cape Conference Business Session in our prayers.

“UNITED PRAYER POINTERS”⁷

Agree Together

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

Claiming God’s Promises

Encourage the members to claim God’s promises. This will help them increase their faith and remind them that nothing is impossible with God. We have provided a list of promises, but encourage the people to claim other promises as well. They will help people take their eyes off of their weaknesses and difficulties and set them on Jesus. For every weakness, for every struggle that we have, we can find Bible promises to claim. Encourage people to search for those promises and write them down so they can claim them in the future.

⁷ This section, including the title, has been extracted word for word from a section of “Leader’s Guide” of the 2015 Ten Days of Prayer entitled “United Prayer Pointers,” available at <http://www.tendaysofprayer.org/>

“With heartfelt simplicity we should state our needs to the Lord, and claim His promises with such faith and confidence that the congregation will know that we have learned to prevail with God in prayer. They will be encouraged to believe that the Lord’s presence is in the meeting, and they will open their hearts to receive His rich blessing. Their faith in your sincerity will be increased, and they will be ready to listen with willing ears to the instruction given by the speaker” (*Evangelism*, p. 146).

“God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will co-operate with Him. All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfillment of His promises. But we must show a firm, undeviating trust in God. Often He delays to answer us in order to try our faith or test the genuineness of our desire. Having asked according to His word, we should believe His promise and press our petitions with a determination that will not be denied” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p.145).

Fasting

Invite those joining you in Ten Days of Prayer to consider some type of fasting, such as fasting from TV, secular music, movies, the Internet, sweets, or other types of food that are hard to digest. Use the extra time to pray and study the Bible, asking God to help you and your congregation experience the fruit of the Spirit. Encourage the members to adopt a simple diet that will allow their brain to be more receptive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you how or what you should pray for in a person’s life or in a particular situation. The Bible tells us that we do not know what to pray for and that the Holy Spirit is the one making intercession for us.

“We must not only pray in Christ’s name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit ‘maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.’ Romans 8:26. Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer ‘exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.’ Ephesians 3:20” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p.147).

Claim Romans 8:26 and ask the Holy Spirit to show you whom to pray for and what to pray for concerning certain people or situations.

Physical Togetherness

As you begin a united prayer session, invite everyone to come close together. When people move close together to form a tight circle, it helps to promote a spirit of unity, which is very important for united prayer. If people are spread out in a room, it is also difficult to hear each other's prayers.

Pray Scriptures

Reading or praying a short portion of Scripture is a wonderful way to ensure you are praying God's will. Praying God's promises back to Him is an incredible faith builder. God loves for us to pray His Word in expressions of praise or promise.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). You'll be amazed at how long a group can pray and enjoy it!

Here's an example of how to pray Scripture back to God: 1 Thessalonians 3:13 says, "May He strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all His holy ones" (NIV). Then pray something like this: "Dear Lord, please strengthen my son's heart-level determination to do what is right. Give him your grace to make decisions that lead to holiness. Jesus, may he look forward to your return . . ." and so on.

Journaling

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

Journaling can be included in the Ten Days of Prayer in several ways. You could provide time during the prayer meeting for people to journal their responses to God in a private prayer journal. Or you could keep a group journal of prayer requests and answers—either in a notebook, on a large poster, or online. A simple way to do this is to draw a line down the middle of the paper. Write requests in the left column and answers in the right. It is exciting and faith-building to look back and see how God has answered prayers!

Reverence

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

Sentence Prayers

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

Silence

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

Singing

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

Taking Prayer Requests

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

Your Daily Time

This is so important! Make sure that you as a leader are spending time daily at the feet of Jesus, talking with Him and reading His Word. If you will make knowing God the first

priority in your life, it will open such a beautiful experience to you. “From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 210).

REVIVAL & REFORMATION INITIATIVES

We invite you to join the world Seventh-day Adventist Church in the following Revival & Reformation Initiatives:

- **Believe His Prophets** – “Believe His Prophets, the sequel to Revived by His Word, is a five-year program reading through the Bible and selected Ellen White writings, including Steps to Christ, Christ’s Object Lessons, Patriarchs and Prophets, Prophets and Kings, The Desire of Ages, The Acts of the Apostles, and The Great Controversy. You can receive daily Bible readings, participate in interactive blogs and read select inspirational writings.”⁸ For more information, go to www.revivalandreformation.org
- **Ten Days of Prayer** – “The Ten Days of Prayer initiative (formerly called Operation Global Rain) was adopted by the world church in 2010.”⁹ Simply put, it is “A Call to Pray.”¹⁰ The Ten Days of Prayer is a yearly initiative for the local church which takes place in January of each year with a focus on reviving us spiritually. For more information, go to www.tendaysofprayer.org
- **United in Prayer** – “United in Prayer is a dynamic, worldwide prayer movement.”¹¹ You can “Sign up to share and receive:
 - Testimonies
 - Prayer requests
 - Practical helps
 - Inspirational messages”¹²
- **“777” Worldwide Holy Spirit Prayer Fellowship** – “Seventh-day Adventists praying seven days a week at 7 (a.m. or p.m.) for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit’s power and presence.”¹³
- **“Worldwide Days for Prayer and Fasting”** – “First Sabbath of each quarter designated as days of prayer and fasting for the world church. Encourage families and individuals to establish the first day of each month and one day a week as normal or partial fast days.”¹⁴

⁸ <http://www.revivalandreformation.org/bhp> [Date Accessed: 23 July 2015]

⁹ <http://www.tendaysofprayer.org/> [Date Accessed: 23 July 2015]

¹⁰ <http://www.tendaysofprayer.org/> [Date Accessed: 23 July 2015]

¹¹ <http://www.revivalandreformation.org/signup> [Date Accessed: 23 July 2015]

¹² <http://www.revivalandreformation.org/signup> [Date Accessed: 23 July 2015]

¹³ Initiatives Document, G.C. Revival and Reformation Committee, p1

¹⁴ Initiatives Document, G.C. Revival and Reformation Committee, p1

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