

International Women's Day of Prayer 2004

March 6, 2004

Resource Packet

You and God, Moments of Peace

Thought on Prayer

Prayer is experiencing a friendship.
It is an interpersonal fellowship.
It is a loving relationship
We are friends: God and I.

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Introduction

Our greatest necessity as we live during the final days of this world's history is prayer. Now is time to make prayer and communion a habit in our life. *You and God, Moments of Peace* has the objective of motivating the church to cultivate this habit.

Prayer helps us comprehend that within it are power and life. It is the answer to prayer that makes everything happen, that changes the natural course of things, and organizes things according to the will of God.

Prayer creates a network of empathy and nearness among the components of the group and each member will benefit and will be blessed.

Here you will find more material than perhaps you are able to use, however we have attempted to provide several options so that you may choose the material that best adapts to the needs of your church. I believe that your team has excellent ideas to enrich the International Day of Prayer. Seek to have a well-organized program and make it as interesting as possible. Please, do not forget to dedicate time to prayer.

May the Lord richly bless you as you prepare this program and put it into action in your Church.

Suggestions for Day of Prayer

- 1. Garden of Prayer:** Use an attractive location that has been reserved for prayer.
- 2. Tele-prayer:** In the week prior to the program, hold a chain of prayer by telephone. Organize a list with names and telephone numbers of former members, sick, and other special requests; and hand out this list so that the entire church may participate.
- 3. Testimonies:** Provide a time when individuals can witness to the special blessings that they have received as the result of prayer.
- 4. Prayer Requests:** Use a prayer chain in a special notebook: Each individual receives a chain link in gold paper and writes down their request on this paper. This request should be passed through another link forming a chain. Display this prayer chain in the church.

5. Prayer Projects

(Choose projects and distribute them among the Sabbath School classes)

Pray for the highest local authority, the governor, the mayor.

Pray for the supermarket or bank manager.

Pray for a physician.

Pray for a former Seventh-day Adventist.

Pray for the church pastor.

Pray for the families in the church.

Pray for church members who are ill.

Pray for the unemployed.

Pray for needy families and offer a basket of food to them.

Pray for the elderly who are in retirement homes in your city.

Pray for children who are in orphanages.

Pray for evangelism projects.

Pray for children who have abandoned the faith.

6. Vigil – Hold a prayer vigil on Friday night.

7. Secret Friends in Prayer – Reveal the Secret Friends during the Prayer Tea.

8. Prayer Notebook – Pray for all the members of the church by name, or if the church is very large in membership, pray for families. Write the name of the family and their prayer request.

9. Gifts for drawings: Prayer mat, baskets for personal devotion material, prayer notebook, Women's Devotional Book, etc.

General Guidelines

Form an Organizing Committee:

Coordinator

Associate Coordinator

Secretary

Others as coordinator desires

This committee has the responsibility of:

Planning the program

Promoting the program beforehand

Elaborating the schedule for the program

Organizing support groups

Support groups have the task of:

Preparing a garden of prayer

Decorating the church

Making the program take place

Preparing a display panel with the title of the theme **“You and God, Moments of Peace”**

Preparing links for the two chains: prayer requests and illustration of the short sermon.

Directing song service and moments of praise

Organizing visitation groups for prayer in homes, handing out a message, and invitations to the program

Scheduling teams to oversee the following programs: Prayer Vigil, Sabbath School, Worship Service, Sabbath Afternoon Program, and Prayer Tea among Friends.

Following is a program for a prayer vigil. The sections of the program are in bold; suggested script for the speaker is in lighter type.

PRAYER VIGIL

FRIDAY, 7:30 pm – 10:00 pm

1. A few words from the coordinator

Are you in need of healing for your mind or body? Do you feel incapable since you are faced with so many problems; whether it is your work or something of a financial nature? Is your home divided? Do you feel alone? Do you need something more in life or a life with more meaning? Do you want to find solutions to so many problems? Do you feel that you need more power? Perhaps, you are asking: "How will I get this help? Where is God?" His help will not delay; God is powerful and eternal. You have a very important key: prayer. And prayer will bring you the assistance that is desired.

We are here at the opening of the prayer program, "You and God, Moments of Peace." Allow the fascinating experience of prayer to be a reality in your life.

In the agitated world in which we live with so many responsibilities, we have almost no time to stop. Praise God, we belong to a people who value these special moments when you and God stop to listen to one another in the midst of so many struggles in life.

Make this "International Day of Prayer," a different day, a day for only you and God. Make the most of this time together.

2. Moments of Praise - Hymns and songs of your choice:

Silent prayer, with musical background. Each individual praying in a personal manner so that the Holy Spirit may work in each heart.

3. Special Music (instrumental, choir, group, quartet, solos, etc...)

4. Thoughts regarding Prayer

Prayer is living a friendship; it is an interpersonal fellowship. It is a loving relationship. Who are friends? God and I. God and all of us.

5. Moments of Prayer – Individual silent prayer. Only you and God. (With musical background)

6. Moments of Reflection (see The Power of Prayer, following)

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Homily

Introduction

In the days in which we are living, many times we miss out on something of great importance—our communication with God. This communion is seeking the power of prayer and it is available to us 24 hours per day.

Perhaps you are a professional and a housewife who is concerned with completing her activities in the home as well as at work. Additionally, your activities in the church involve a great deal of time! Even if your life is like this, separate a time to become involved with our Divine Master. He has many blessings to offer you. All you need to do is ask, because He has power.

Psalm 86: 1-7

“Hear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Guard my life, for I am devoted to you. You are my God; save your servant who trusts in you. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I call to you all day long. Bring joy to your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you. Hear my prayer, O Lord; listen to my cry for mercy. In the day of my trouble I will call to you, for you will answer me.” (NIV)

I. There is power in prayer

There is power in prayer offered by the humblest sinner. There is power in the supplication coming from the most profound depths. God hears all who come to Him in supplication.

- There are two ways in which we find answers in the power of prayer:

1- The first is when we feel the necessity of something that would be good for our life and then we seek orientation from heaven; we earnestly request something of God and He responds. How wonderful it is to feel God's favorable answer to our concerns! We jump for joy, singing, “God is so good.” He answered my prayer.

When we are greatly in need of some object that is going to be useful to us, if we do not go after it, it will not come to us. Why not talk to God about this? He understands our necessities. If it is something that is for our good, He will help us to acquire what we need.

When we want to be a good athlete, we need to practice, train, learn, discipline our habits and struggle to obtain the proposed objective. God does not interfere in that which the human being has the ability to do or obtain through his or her own efforts. He allows us to obtain these things on our own.

We are endowed with capacity and intelligence to climb the steps of life. Our intelligence enables us to decide where and how to seek solutions to our problems.

Seeking is a necessity to overcome a deficiency. God values the individual who makes an effort, who struggles to overcome. There is no greater reward than receiving an answer regarding our anxieties. This is a reason for great joy.

There is power in the prayer of a repentant sinner. God is always attending the worst sinner to teach him or her how to seek Him in truth and rightness.

2. The second manner of enjoying the power of prayer is the answer from God to a request that was not uttered, a request which is deep within our being.

God knows of our necessities. How many times have you received a blessing for something that you were not concerned with? However, God knew that this something was necessary for your life. In His greatness, He placed the answer to the non-uttered prayer in your pathway, because He knows that tomorrow you are going to need this even if you do not understand today.

II. Illustration –

1. Testimony of Meibel Guedes

I had experienced several infections in my kidney and I had several examinations done to discover the cause of these infections. What a surprise when the first urograph showed that I had only one kidney and that this kidney had hydronephroses and a large part of it was already affected. Surgery was done to correct the urethra. I became very sick during this surgery. The kidney became paralyzed; the drains did not work. I was very weak. The surgeon was called and the medical team decided that I should undergo another surgery. My family and the members of my church united in prayer.

The doctors were already in the operating room, the stretcher was in my room so that I could be taken to surgery, and suddenly the drains and the kidney began to respond. There was no longer any need for another surgery. God had preformed a miracle in my favor. This took place some time ago and God has kept me alive. I learned to be totally dependent on Him. I live a normal life joyfully carrying out Women's Ministries work.

God can make miracles happen in your life. He performed this miracle and many more in my life. These miracles have happened in our congregation also. Here is _____ to tell us her story.

2. Find a testimony regarding an answered prayer and allow that individual to speak regarding her experience.

III. Conclusion

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs. 3: 5, 6 - NIV)

Allow God to lead in you life. Trust your whole being to Him, your entire life, because He goes beyond our expectations, giving us much more than we deserve.

7. Moments of Praise – hymns and songs

8. Thought on Prayer

“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..” – Steps to Christ, pg.93.

9. Moments of Prayer - Groups of three people praying in favor of chosen projects. (Leadership should have prayer requests/projects ready or give the groups time to develop their own.)

10. Moments of Spiritual Reflection: The only link that unites us to God

Illustration Material - With gold paper, make a chain with 11 or more links and hang it where it can be seen. Place the picture of a person on the lower link, on the highest link, place a picture of Jesus. Add the word “prayer” at the time you are going to talk about this subject. “The only link that unites the human being to God is prayer.” You may want to put “prayer” on all blank links.

“Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.”. (Psalm 25: 1)

At times, it seems that the distance which exists between heaven and earth is endless. As we constantly come across violence, we feel lost, alone, hopeless. How many of us have become so affected to the point we feel emotional, mental and physical disarray. Many of these situations bring about irreparable situations for which medication has no solutions.

How many times have we felt lost and abandoned? When we have serious financial, emotional, or other problems, it seems that everyone and everything is against us. A feeling of emptiness and loneliness comes about. Many times we seek a solution from a friend and we do not find an answer; perhaps we ask for help from our boss and we are not understood; family members may ignore us when we request their assistance regarding a problem. This happens when we are not connected to the Main Link. This Link is like a magnet that attracts us to the solution. If we become too involved with the glitter of this world, we lower our heads; we forget to look on high from where the solution to our problems comes.

We human beings live here and the more that we lower our heads, the more we are going to sink into the deceits of this world. We were not created to depend on the world and we submerge ourselves in it. We were created to live like an eagle, which does not fear the storm, because it

does not remain still, it does not fear the darkness. The eagle goes out, flaps its wings and flies beyond the storm. It, therefore, does not suffer physically because it flies high and overcomes the bad weather.

God is above because He is the Power. The human being is at the lowest and weakest link of the chain where the storms of life are frightening. The devastating fury sometimes appears without our awareness, even without our perception, and it attempts to ravage any one it can. This fury does not choose the rich, the beautiful, intelligent or the poor. It comes without reserve, devastating all. This distance between God and man, however becomes just a step away when our life, mind and spirit are connected on high. When the link of prayer is firm in the long chain that connects us to God, it does not matter if we are at the first and weakest link of this world, because the winds and storm, as strong as they may be, become weak when faced with the power of our Lord.

When we are constantly united to God in prayer, the storms that come our way become ineffective because with God we will be beyond the most difficult of circumstances.

Appeal- At this time, how many would like to ask for strength, ability and knowledge to be victorious with our God? When we ask for wisdom from our God, we acquire the capacity to be victorious.

Invite the participants to repeat the following together - The Prayer of Wisdom: (With musical background)

- Lord! Give me hope. Take sadness from me and do not give it to anyone else.
 - Lord! Plant in my heart the seed of love and take hate from me.
 - Help me to transform my enemies in colleagues, my colleagues in friends, and my friends into members of my family.
 - God! Grant me the strength to control my desires, and give me reason to overcome my illusions.
 - Strengthen my sight so that I may see my faults, and close my eyes so that I shall not comment on the faults of others.
 - Give me wisdom to forgive. And take revenge far from me.
 - Help me to make the greatest number of people happy so that their days of happiness may increase and their nights of sadness may diminish.
 - Do not allow me to be a lamb before the strong, or a Lion before the weak.
 - Impress tolerance and forgiveness on my heart, and take pride and presumption far from me.
- God! Fill my heart with divine faith to always praise your name, Lord! Make me a person who is just and trusting in prayer. Amen.

May God Grant us faith, certainty and wisdom to face the struggles and challenges of this life.

11. The Lord's Prayer,
(With hands joined).

SABBATH**SABBATH SCHOOL**

Distribute prayer projects in classes so that each class may pray for a Project today.

1. Superintendent's Opening Message

On this special day the family of God is gathered for the Women's International Day of Prayer. It is a day to meet with our God, because He freely offered His son to come into this world and bring us salvation. It is a day for us to experience Christian life with our heart full of love. We need to pray always. We need to be near our Savior.

Prayer was the secret power of Christ. Although He was the son of God, clothed in human nature, He did not employ His divine power in His own favor. While on earth, in everything, He depended on the Father. He prayed an entire night before choosing the twelve. Apparently, every time that He prepared for a great temptation or important work, He withdrew to the solitude of the mountains and spent the night in prayer.

Through prayer, He achieved power for a perfect life. He always had a word for the tired, relief for the sick, comfort for those who weep, and healing for the spiritually blind.

This is what Jesus did through prayer. This power is available to us today! Power for a victorious life, power for a happier life, power to witness to others of God's love for us.

Yes, prayer has power! Prayer moves the hand of God and operates miracles. Turn to prayer, and you will have the power of God in your life. Jesus says, *"Therefore I say unto you, whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."* Mark 11:24 KJV

2. Moments of Praise - Hymn**3. Moments of Prayer** – Groups of two**4. Missionary Moment** – Mission Story – Story of Women's Ministries and prayer from your division/union/conference if available**5. Sabbath School Bible Study in Classes****6. Moments of Prayer in Classes**

WORSHIP SERVICE

Some Guidelines:

1. The liturgy should follow the model for your church.
2. Gain time, avoiding empty moments between parts.
3. Organize the platform participants beforehand.
4. Avoid announcements and comments immediately after the sermon.
5. Make worship a time of a real encounter with GOD.

Children's Story – How would you feel if you were to go on a trip with your parents and you got lost from them? I have no doubt that you would become very scared, who knows, you might even cry? Today's story is about a girl named Simei who went on a long trip with her parents far from her home in Brazil. Her father is a pastor evangelist. She went to the United States to attend a large church congress. Thousand of people come from all over the world for these meetings. They are called General Conference sessions. At these meetings you meet many people and you hear beautiful stories from the mission fields about how the message of Jesus is reaching other countries and very distant locations.

Simei was attending the meetings with her parents. Suddenly, she met her friend, Carla, who was also with her parents. Simei asked her parents if she could go look at the stands which were set up with material, photos, and interesting objects from the countries that they represented.

While Simei was walking around with her friend, Carla, time passed by quickly and the meeting that her parents attended ended. Simei's parents left the location where they were seated and went to their hotel, thinking that she would not be alone, but that Simei had gone with her friend's family.

There were approximately 30,000 people at the meetings and many of them walked through the convention center halls. Simei began to walk thinking that she would come across her parents, but she did not find them. She became very worried, almost crying. She stopped then and prayed. "Jesus, I am lost, I cannot find my parents. Show me where I can find them. I trust that You, Lord, are going to help me. In Jesus name, Amen." She had been going in one direction but after her prayer, she went in the opposite direction. All the people who passed by her were strangers. Then she looked back and saw a lady she knew. She began to run after the lady and shout, "Mrs. Onélia! Mrs. Onélia! Mrs. Onélia!" But the lady did not answer. When Simei looked again at the lady's face, she realized her mistake. The lady was not Mrs. Onélia. What a let down! But at that moment, Simei looked to her left. Through one of the entrances to the auditorium, she could see her parents. She ran toward them, embraced them, and cried a lot and said, "I do not want to be far away from you."

Children, many times we go through difficult situations, correct? How good it is when we speak to Jesus through prayer and we ask for His help. He never abandons us; all we have to do is trust that He will show us the safe route. He always hears children's prayers.

SERMON**You and God, Moments of Peace***I- Introduction*

Mary is a very busy young mother. She has two children and she works in the Personnel Department of a large business firm. Her many responsibilities in which she is involved, caring for her husband and children, her home tasks, and her work outside the home do not allow Mary to separate time to be alone with God. She has made many attempts, but she has been unsuccessful because her life is very, very busy.

Studying the Bible is really very difficult. When she does find some time, she likes to watch a program on television, because for her it is very important to be up on current events.

When Sabbath arrives, Mary and her family go to church, but they are not happy. Sabbath is boring; the church program does not please them. What could be happening with Mary and her family? They realize that their happiness is slipping away and that they need a closer relationship with God. The spiritual programs are not of much benefit to them. Witnessing? Don't mention it! This is a task for the church leaders.

Perhaps you are able to identify with this story. This story reflects the reality of many people who claim to be Christians, but they do not take time out to be alone with God.

*II- Development of Topic***A. Time for God**

It is not possible to have a healthy spiritual life, without separating some time for you to be alone with God in a close relationship in which you can open your heart to Him and He can hear you and He can transmit a message of peace, certainty, and comfort. (Van Pelt)

Our days are empty. We need to fill our life with things that edify us. We need to rest in Jesus Christ, because only He is able to fill this emptiness and bring us peace. Isaiah 26:3 states, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."(KJV) We are concerned with the situation of the world, with war, and violence. We have difficulties in our relationships. We think about our mistakes. We are afraid of getting sick. We have feelings of guilt. Worry does not solve our problems, but it does not add any solution to our concerns; to the contrary, it creates new problems. None of us is free from experiencing sadness and failure. However, if we concentrate on these things we will lose joy and peace. In Proverbs 23:7 we find, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." That which we allow to occupy our mind will determine the level of the quality of life that we lead. Our spirit of peace slips away little by little until it is completely gone. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." says the prophet. This is the secret to reach perfect peace. We need to learn to give our worries and concerns to God instead of keeping them to ourselves. If you want to feel inner

peace and spiritual strength, there is no other alternative than taking time to be alone with God, time to pray, and read the word of God. (Van Pelt)

1. For This You Need:

- To determine an available time.
- During this time avoid interruptions.
- Think that you are in the arms of God and that you can feel peace, assurance, tranquility and the certainty that He is beside you.
- Listen to the voice of God speaking to your heart, be attentive to His words.
- Express your feelings, if you are sad, tell Him what you are feeling. If you are happy, speak of your happiness. He is your best friend and my best friend, our faithful friend.
- Place your cares and concerns in the hands of God and victory will come as a result of total communion with God through prayer. I Thess. 5:17

2. To develop the habit of Personal Devotions it is essential to learn the correct manner of expressing your words to God. Learn to:

Praise and exalt the name of the Lord

"I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High."
Psalm 9:1-2 NIV

Confess or Ask Forgiveness for our Sins

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9 NIV "If we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cling to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted."- *Steps to Christ*, pg. 95.

Ask and Believe in God

"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not." James 4:2 NIV

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." Matthew 21:22
This is the marvelous promise and the key to believing.

Many times we react like that man who drew near to Christ asking for a favor for his sick son. "But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" We note where the "if" appears in the text, Mark 9:22, 23, "But if You can do anything...." That "if" was used in reference to Jesus. The Lord answered tenderly, saying, "If you can?" All things are possible to him who believes."

3. Submit your desires to the Lord

We act in a correct manner when we ask God for help, presenting Him our plans and our wants. However, before answering our prayers, he wants to hear us saying, "yet not my will, but yours be done." Luke 22:42.

4. Listen to the Voice of God

"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10 NIV.

Do you have friends? Imagine that as you spent some time with your friends, you spoke the entire time, and your friends remained quiet. This friendship would soon lose its meaning. "The communication in a friendship should be reciprocal. After praying and asking for God's leading for your day, it is time to remain silent and listen to Him. It is our silence that makes the relationship reciprocal." (*Van Pelt, Pg. 22*)
Submit your will and desires to the Lord and listen for Him to speak.

B. A Life of Constant Prayer

Ephesians 6:18 – "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." This Bible text presents the manner in which someone can attain a meaningful spiritual life. The Apostle Paul uses two words that indicate the intensity of prayer. All the time and perseverance. I Thess. 5:17 "*Pray without ceasing.*" With a life of intense prayer we will feel the heavenly atmosphere in our life and in our Christian experience. Pray continually is being in complete harmony with heaven maintaining direct contact with God.

The story is told that a maid prayed continually, and she was asked how she did this. She answered, "When I prepare the food, I ask that the Holy Spirit work in me, in the same manner that the fire works with the food, making it useful for life. When I clean the floor, I ask God to remove my sins like the cleaning product that removes the dirt." In this manner, she maintained constant contact with God, without ceasing.

C. At What Time Can You and God Be Together?

Schedule your life in such a manner that you can have a systematic time slot. Seek out the best time, when no one is going to bother you. Psalms 5:1-3: "Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation." NIV. The Holy Bible gives us a suggestion that early in the morning is the best time for prayer, before beginning daily activities, before the pressures of the day begin. If we really separate this time for communion with God, our daily tasks and responsibilities will progress with more tranquility.

Our prayer should be that of surrender to God, placing our plans at the feet of Christ, allowing Him to use us for His service and asking for His companionship for that day. These moments that have been separated for you to be with God, should become a pleasant habit, as though true friends were talking. We should submit our plans to Him and let him direct them, because only He can know what is best for us.

"In this way, day by day, you have put every aspect of your life into the hands of God. As a result, your life will conform more with His will for you." (*Van Pelt, page 14*)

This is the only formula for you to find true peace, because a life lived daily with Christ is a life of peace and tranquility. Your hopes will not be deposited in yourself, but in the God of the

Universe. (Van Pelt)

The devotion that you have on one day will not be sufficient for the next, because Satan is constantly changing his tactics to catch us. Each day, he places different circumstances before us, and only through the strength acquired from God can we pass through these temptations without greater suffering. (Van pelt)

D. Where can you and God meet for moments of Peace?

A calm, reserved and silent location is necessary. It is in this location that you and God will be together for perfect communication and friendship, sincerity and trust. This friend, Jesus, will never betray your trust; to the contrary, in your times of greatest struggle and concerns.

He carries you in His arms. All that you need to do is surrender yourself totally to Him. Have a calm location. For JESUS an adequate place for prayer was so important that He recommended it. In the Bible we read in Matthew 6:6.

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

It is not enough to close the door to the room. You also need to close the door to your thoughts, so that at this time your mind can be in complete harmony with God. “‘Close the door.’ This symbolizes the necessity of shutting out disturbing distractions – the phone, television, children....” (Van Pelt, Page 15)

“God asks that we concentrate on Him as we pray and study so that His Spirit can direct our wills and speak to our emotions. A divided and fragmented mind will not be as receptive as a mind that gives God focused attention.” (Van Pelt, Page 15)

E. Organizing Your Personal Devotion

Your time with God can become the best moments spent in your day.

According to the Adventist writer, Nancy Van Pelt, we should organize our material so that these moments may be very interesting.

A basket that has been nicely decorated may be used to place all the material that will be used in one's personal devotion. Items for the basket might include: Bible, Text marking pen, Colored pencil, WM Devotional book, Ruler, Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, Prayer Notebook. The notebook may be a notebook where your prayer requests are written, gratitude for answered prayer, and the date that the request was answered. In this manner when the time comes for personal devotion, everything is ready without wasting time.

F. Inspiring Music

So that these moments may be spiritually uplifting, put on background music, an inspiring song. Now, the music is playing, you are in a location with complete privacy. It is the time that you

have chosen for your meditation. Offer a prayer of preparation, asking God to prepare your mind for study. Be specific in your prayers.

G. Discipline

Personal devotion requires a lot of discipline. In the beginning, you are going to face difficulties, but the results are marvelous. You are going to feel changes in your life as a whole. Go forward toward this goal and you will be a happier person. Do not doubt that you will want to share this experience with others, encouraging other individuals to experience this happy reality. Moreover, you will be a blessing in the midst of your family, church and community.

People who experience these moments with God are more likely to succeed in their undertakings, because, in the first place, they place themselves in the hands of God. You and God can have a daily encounter if you discipline yourself and place yourself in His arms of love and kindness. He will grant you this marvelous experience.

III- Conclusion

A professor lived a life similar to the life of Jesus. Everyone greatly appreciated this individual—his colleagues, students and friends. Everyone was impressed by his kind and pleasant manner of dealing with all people around him.

The students said, “We know what the professor is like in the classroom, on the street, on the school grounds, but we do not know how he is in his home.” Someone volunteered to hide at the professor's home to verify his lifestyle.

The professor arrived in his home, greeted his wife caringly and went to take his bath. Meanwhile, she set the table for dinner.

After dinner, he went to his office and read the Bible for a long time. After reading, he closed his eyes and with his hands folded, he prayed in silence. He opened his eyes, looked up and said, **“Jesus, you and I continue to be friends as always.”**

Where was the secret of such a marvelous life? It was in the intimate communion that the professor maintained with God. You and I can be more loving, more gentle, and more happy if we have this daily communion with God. This communion is going to make a great difference in your life, in the midst of your family, in church unity. And you will be a person who feels happy to tell others about all that Christ has done in your life. If all members of the church make personal devotions a habit, we will be a united, victorious church; we will be triumphant, and soon we will see a repetition of the fullness of the Holy Spirit and we will see Christ returning, because we will proclaim the gospel with power.

IV- Appeal

You can begin your personal devotional life now. Pray silently, read your Bible, talk with God about your difficulties of not having time to be alone with Him. Now, while we are in God's

house, begin your moments of peace. **(Put on instrumental background music for meditation and give the entire church the opportunity to have their moments of prayer. To close, a soloist can sing a hymn - "Speak to My Soul" or "Nearer, Still Nearer" (or another very spiritual hymn). Make an invitation so that everyone decides to take time for "You and God Moments of Peace".)**

Responsive Reading – To close the worship service (see below)

Responsive Reading – To close the worship service

ALL – YOU AND GOD, MOMENTS OF PEACE

LEADER – Today is the Women's International Day of Prayer, it is a special day because we can commit ourselves to seek spiritual growth through a life of prayer.

MEN – Today we want to praise, exalt and lift up the name of our God because of the wonders that He has performed for us. We are grateful and we want to take more time for a more intimate communion with our Creator and Savior.

WOMEN – Today, we want the Lord to purify us, guide us, and make us similar to Him. For this, we want to take time each day of our life to be alone with You. We want a sincere and permanent relationship.

YOUTH AND TEENS - We have a life ahead of us, goals, dreams, and objectives to be reached. On this day we ask for Your guidance and leading in our lives. Lord, we want to walk beside You each day of our existence; only in this way will we walk in assurance. Use us to be instruments of peace and love to our fellow human beings.

CHILDREN - Lord, we love you very much and we believe that You, Lord, always hear our prayers.

LEADER – Lord, here are Your people, thanking You and asking You for blessings for their lives. This group joins together to pray the prayer that You left as an example.

ALL – The Lord's Prayer (the prayer may be written)

ADVENTIST YOUTH PROGRAM

SABBATH AFTERNOON

1. Moments of Praise – Hymns and Songs

2. Moments of Prayer – In pairs

3. Ten Simple Rules of Prayer (Give ten youth these phrases to read or memorize.)

- a. Pray where you are. God is present in all places.
- b. Pray, whenever possible, in a calm location, where you can be alone. It is good to fix your mind on God, avoiding all distractions.
- c. Pray to God in a simple and natural manner; speak as though you were speaking to a friend. Tell Him what is in your heart.
- d. Pray, remembering blessings from time to time, and give thanks for all of them.
- e. Pray for forgiveness from God for unworthy things that you may have done. He is always close to humble and contrite hearts.
- f. Pray for the things that you need, especially for those things that will make your life purer and deserving of the Christian name.
- g. Pray for others; remember difficult situations that afflict them and the assistance that they need.
- h. Pray for the World and its necessities; ask God to help men and women to solve problems.
- i. Pray, above all, that the will of God may be done through your life and the world in which you live.
- j. Pray, and listen to the answer to your prayer.

4. Witness to the Power of Prayer-(Local Church)

5. Seminar

SEMINAR**I. You and God – Peace Through Prayer (Topic)****Introduction**

Prayer is a dialogue between God and His people. We express our love to God through:

- Our ANSWERS to Him and in the manner in which He works in our lives.
- The RELATIONSHIP of our minds and hearts with His purpose.
- The SPIRITUAL EXERCISE that keeps us connected to the Lord!

We talk to God about our necessities. We ask...God responds.

Spiritual – Existential emptiness does not find any other way to real satisfaction, except through communion with God. *“There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.” John 1:9*

Emotional – God can calm our hearts when our strength fails. **Psalms 37:4** – *“Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.” NIV*

Mental – Divide our thoughts with God, bring divine guidance to problems *“I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Psalm 34:4 (NIV)*

Faith – Faith has been the strongest of all directions for physical health. *“A heart at peace gives life to the body...” Proverbs 14:30 (NIV)*

II. Why Should I Pray?

People always feel the necessity of being close to God. He gave us prayer to fill this necessity.

- **To seek comfort in time of necessity.**

“Our hearts, O Lord, were made for you, and they are restless until they rest in you.” (Saint Augustine)

- **To experience God's forgiveness.**

So that God may know our desire to become better. *“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. II Chronicles 7: 14 (KJV)*

Christ says...

“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is

weak." Matthew 26:41 (NIV)

III. How Should I Pray?

...Involving myself completely with God. No interruptions!

Thought

...Use your mind completely to try to understand God's will
...Concentrate in the most complete manner that you can.

Feeling

...Your emotions help you to relate with God.
...Make certain that God speaks to the heart as He speaks to the mind.

Willingness

...Be yourself when you pray.
...In the prayer of rejoicing, be open.
...When involved in problems, promise to grow.

Some CONDITIONS for efficient prayer:

***Prepare yourself** – Get rid of the concerns of your heart; read the Scriptures before praying.

***Be aware** of the presence of Jesus in your life.

***Be confident** - pray with faith, in the expectation that your prayers will be answered. *"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." Matthew 21: 22 (NIV)*

***Be receptive** - Accept the wisdom of God. Do not desire to teach God.

***Be unselfish** – in the form that you pray; who are you praying for? Do not ignore others to benefit your own interests.

Some OBSTACLES for efficient prayer:

Thought

...Temptation to ask for personal benefit.
...Thinking that our prayers are too insignificant and unimportant.

Lack of Faith

...Loss of trust when we do not obtain our desires.
...Taking time from God, without giving Him our time.

Dishonesty

...Appearing to be what we are not.

Ignorance

...Forgetting that God may have different plans for things.
...Forgetting that we do not always have the right answers.

Relentless Spirit

...Criticizing instead of complementing
...Always seeing oneself as more holy than others.

Some TYPES of prayer:

Gratitude

...We offer our prayers in gratitude for the gifts that God gives to us: gratitude for our body, mind, and life.

Confession

...We speak to God regarding our failures. We confess to experience forgiveness.

Praise

...Offer worship in the most elevated and personnel manner. We worship the greatness and love of God.

Requests

...We ask for our necessities in health, strength and assistance in our Christian life.

Intercession

...We pray for the sick, our enemies, for those who witness of Christ and for those who need Christ.

Guidance

...We pray for God to teach us to live a Christian life, that He may help us to solve our problems. It is difficult for us to solve our problems alone.

IV. WHEN SHOULD I PRAY?

We can never pray too much... So pray:

During special worships

...At weekly meetings.
...During times of tragedy or necessity.

In contact with Christians

...In the congregation.
...In prayer groups.

...In the home with family.

“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” Matthew 18:19 (NIV)

Alone

...Taking time out for you and God.

...A more intimate relationship with prayer and Bible study.

...In spontaneous prayer during the day.

Possible Answers:

"YES"

"NO"...When God has plans that are different from yours.

“WAIT A WHILE”

...Your faith needs to be as great as your strength.

...God may require patience of you.

V. CONCLUSION

PRAYER is our SOURCE of:

...Spiritual growth

...Forgiveness from God

...Faith building

...Guide to Christ

“Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse...” – *Steps to Christ*, page 95.

Hold on to this key! Use this key! Make our Lord Jesus' promise yours, because He promised in His Word:

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” Mark 11:24. (NIV)

Appeal – Today is the day for us to seek our God more and more. Try these ideas about prayer for yourself and afterwards encourage other people to make prayer the center of their lives. Be assured that God knows what is best for us.

May your life be a life of prayer!

6- Interacting in the Seminar

Discuss the topic that was just presented in groups of three by answering the following questions:

- 1- What topics do you consider as very important?
- 2- What can I apply today in my spiritual life?
- 3- What can I apply to my family?

7- Moments of prayer in the groups which interacted during the seminar.

8- Hymn –A hymn about prayer, done in a prayerful manner.

9- Closing – Everyone praying the Lord's Prayer with hands joined.

TEA...AND PRAYER

Tea among Friends and Prayer Friends

Objective: Fellowship, reveal secret friend in prayer and thank the support team.

Local: Restaurant or Church Fellowship Hall.

Time : After the Sabbath afternoon program.

Food: Contract a catering service or each participant may bring a food item according to the request of the organizing committee.