

Chesterfield Seventh-Day Adventist Church Prayer Meeting 2023

Theme: Seeking Revival

15 March 2023 - GOD'S SOLUTION TO OUR STRUGGLE

(reading taken from "10 Days of Prayer 2021")

"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it" (Luke 9:23, 24).

Two Secrets for Lasting Revival

Jesus offers a solution for carnal Christians who want to become spiritual Christians. He says, "Remain joined to me, just as I also remain joined to you" (John 15:4, NIV). In other words, "Abide in Me." But how?

Ellen White says that abiding in Christ means—

1. "a constant **receiving of His Spirit**" and
2. "a life of **unreserved surrender** to His service" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 676)

This two-part divine solution leads not only to revival but also to a happy Christian life. Why? Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11). By taking these two steps, we experience "Christ in you," or His presence in our everyday lives, and that means we share the hope of His glory (Colossians 1:27).

The crucial point: We daily ask for and receive by faith the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and we daily surrender everything we have and are to God. He provides the joy!

On Day 1 we talked about how important it is to ask for the Holy Spirit, and on Day 3 we studied our need for surrender. Today we'll take another look at these two steps—with a special focus on our need to ask and surrender *daily*.

Why Should We Ask Daily for the Holy Spirit?

Years ago I read the story of a gangster who converted to Christ. He wholeheartedly confessed his perjury, theft, and other crimes, and as a result he experienced a tremendous divine intervention. God completely turned his life around.

This impressed me. I said to myself, *I'm doing fine in most ways, but I don't have experiences like that.* So I prayed, "Lord, I also want to confess all my known sins and the sins You have yet to show me. In addition, I will get up an hour earlier each day to pray and read the Bible. I want to see if You will also intervene in my life."

Praise God, He did intervene in my life! Not because I earned some merit by getting up early but because I daily placed myself where the Holy Spirit could reach me. If a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit was a daily necessity for Jesus on this earth, how much more do we need this power? Paul writes about the inward man "being renewed day by day," and he prays that God's people would be "strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man" (2 Corinthians 4:16 and Ephesians 3:16). And Ellen White offers this hope: "The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50). Our "inward person" needs daily care.

Why Should We Surrender Daily to Jesus?

Trying to help His disciples understand the sacrificial nature of discipleship, Jesus told them, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). To deny self means giving Jesus control over our lives each day. The apostle Paul explains it like this: "I die daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31).

As humans we resist surrender, forgetting that "when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). We receive physical life at birth, but we still eat every day to maintain health. We receive spiritual life when we are born again, but we still need daily spiritual food or we will die. Just as we cannot eat our meals ahead of time, neither can we surrender to Christ for tomorrow. Ellen White writes, "However complete may have been our consecration at conversion, it will avail us nothing unless it be renewed daily" (*Our Father Cares*, p. 144).

How to Get Started

The best way—and only way—to daily receive the Holy Spirit and surrender to Jesus is by having daily personal worship. Unless we choose God each day, our promises and good intentions are like "ropes of sand" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 47). Will you commit today to sharing the best part of your day with Him? "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).

Praying God's Word

Remain in the best relationship there is.

"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. . . . If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:4, 7).

Lord, thank You for growing our trust when we daily surrender to You. Lead us to know the Holy Spirit better. Let Your desires be our desires.

Live in the best relationship every day.

"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33, NIV).

Dear Lord, teach us to put You first in everything. Show us how to begin each day with You.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Ask God to bless the efforts of our local, regional, and world church.

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: I Need Thee Every Hour (#483); Day by Day (#532); Abide With Me (#50); Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus (#290); Moment by Moment (#507). *Other Songs:* Open Our Eyes, Lord; Seek Ye First.