

Chesterfield Seventh-Day Adventist Church Prayer Meeting 2023

Theme: Seeking Revival

22 March 2023 - PRAYING GOD'S PROMISES

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

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

Impossible Victories Become Possible

Jesus redeemed us so "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:14). But how do we build faith in what He has promised? How should we pray so that we are sure of being filled with the Holy Spirit? How does a revived heart lead to real-life Christian maturity?

For many years I knew about a devotional practice called "praying with promises," but for a long time I did not practice it. When I discovered the blessings of praying God's promises, I wanted to share with others. Several years ago I wrote a book called *Steps to Personal Revival*, which includes a chapter about how praying Scripture is the key to practical Christian experience. Some readers sent these testimonies:

"I never thought I would find such new knowledge about prayer—praying based on God's promises, as you explained. In the meantime, God has given me victories in my life that I never thought possible."

"Since I learned to pray with promises, my life has been transformed. . . . My wife has noticed a complete change in me. Also, I'm surprised at myself."

Try It Yourself

What does it mean to pray with promises? We choose a Bible promise or command and pray those words back to God. We rely on Him to do as He promised. We allow Him to guide our prayers and speak to us through His Word. And if we feel doubt—as everyone does at times—we point to the promises and claim them as God's personal guarantee. As we fill our hearts and prayers with Scripture, our faith is strengthened and we come to know God's mind as never before. Ellen White writes, "To blot the promises of God from the Word would be like blotting the sun from the sky. . . . God has placed the promises in His Word to lead us to have faith in Him. In these promises He draws back the veil from eternity" (*My Life Today*, p. 338).

The Bible offers clear guidance for our prayers. First, we are told to make our requests in the name of Jesus: "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:14). God also gives a general promise that He answers prayers that are according to His will: "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14, 15). God reveals His will in the commands and promises of the Bible, and we can rely on Him to do what He has promised. Verse 15 goes on: "And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

What does that mean? When we pray for something that we know is according to God's will, He is already answering at the same moment. We may not see visible results yet. And usually we don't notice anything emotionally. But our prayers are answered by faith, not by our feelings. The feelings will follow later, but for now, we trust the promise.

For example, I have learned something when praying with people addicted to alcohol and nicotine. At the moment they pray for deliverance, they may not notice anything. They must receive the deliverance by faith. But perhaps a few hours later they notice they don't have the old craving for drinking or tobacco. At this moment, they have received the practical deliverance requested in the prayer.

Ellen White also offers insights on praying with promises. "[God] is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name. They may expect large things if they have faith in His

promises" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668). "Plead for the Holy Spirit. God stands back of every promise He has made. With your Bible in your hands say, I have done as Thou hast said. I present Thy promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you' (Matthew 7:7)" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147).

Jesus promises, "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). Are you praying His promises every day? When we pray in His name and according to His will, all heaven is moved!

Praying God's Word

God is waiting to give us the Holy Spirit.

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

"But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39).

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

Father, we read that You will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask You, to those who believe in You, and to those who obey You. This is our desire. Please accomplish this in our lives, for we cannot do it ourselves. Thank You for pouring Your love into our hearts.

He invites us to be filled with the Spirit.

"Be filled with the Spirit" or "let yourself be continually and repeatedly refilled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18, paraphrase).

Dear Father, teach us to ask continually and repeatedly for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We don't want to lack the Spirit like the foolish virgins. Fill us with the wisdom found in Your Word.

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: Standing on the Promises (#518); Wonderful Words of Life (#286); Give Me the Bible (#272); Great Is Thy Faithfulness (#100). *Other Songs:* Ancient Words; Psalm 19 Song.