

West Houston SDA Church 40 Days of Prayer Feb. 27-April 6, 2024

Main Theme: Moving Closer to God.

Sub-themes:

1. Love
2. Faith
3. Victory Over Self
4. Spiritual Growth
5. Our Mission

Introduction

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-8).

God is ever listening to the prayers of His children. We do not pray in vain. Let us go to our Father in humble prayer.

Love

Day 1: The Perfect Love

“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

“If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

God gives us the perfect example for love. He is the greatest lover of His people. And He wants His people to love Him in return. How do we demonstrate our love to God? By keeping His commandments.

Let us pray for grace to love God truly.

Day 2: Loving God in His Terms

Let us read God's Word in Exodus 20:2-17. What do you get from these verses? Share with your prayer partner.

Pray for grace to do God's will according to the guidance He provides in His Word.

Day 3: True Love for God

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment” (Mark 12:30)

“Whatever divides the affections, or takes away from the heart supreme love for God, or prevents unlimited confidence and entire trust in Him, assumes the character and takes the form of an idol... Nothing is to divide our supreme love for Him or our delight in Him. Your will, wishes, plans, desires, and pleasures must all be in subjection” (*Testimonies For The Church* 1:436,437).

Love for God involves total surrender to Him and commitment to serve Him. Let us pray for power to avoid all idols in our lives.

Day 4: Loving Others

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it, is* this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30,31).

Without the presence of God in our lives, love for self is messed up. It is selfish. So, we are unable to love others as God requires of us. Let us pray for full surrender for God to cleanse us and enable us to love others as we love ourselves.

Day 5: The Power to Love Others

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love” (1John 4:7,8).

Think about loving others as yourself. Then look at this statement: “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

Sisters and brothers, loving others in the deepest sense of the word is a serious matter. Let us pray for grace to love God truly and to love others as we love ourselves.

Day 6: True Love for Others

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV).

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts produces these qualities. Let us pray God to fill us with His Holy Spirit.

Day 7: More Love for Other

“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8)

“The supreme test of Christianity is its effects on our relations with one another... Where charity is lacking there is a tendency to magnify the faults and failings of others” (Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, p. 580).

Does any of us want people to highlight his or her failures or sins? By God’s grace, let us love others as we love ourselves.

Day 8: The Power to Love

“When one is fully emptied of self, when every false god is cast out of the soul, the vacuum is filled by the inflowing of the Spirit of Christ. Such a one has the faith that purifies the soul from defilement. He is conformed to the Spirit, and he minds the things of the Spirit. He has no confidence in self. Christ is all and in all. He receives with meekness the truth that is constantly being unfolded, and gives the Lord all the glory, saying, “God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.” “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God” (*Gospel Workers*, p.287).

Total surrender to God enables us to love Him and to love others, “for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13). Let us allow God to enable us to love.

Faith

Day 9: What is Faith

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

Today there are many channels of hearing the word of God. How much time do we allow ourselves to hear the word?

Let us pray for the desire to hear the word of God.

Day 10: Why Faith Matters

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1,2). We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ

“But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

May God increase our faith in Him.

Day 11: A Gift of God

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8,9).

“Faith is trusting God—believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our

ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership and accepts its blessing. Truth, uprightness, purity, have been pointed out as secrets of life's success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these principles" (*Education*, p. 253).

Let us pray for grace to continue trusting God in every situation.

Day 12: The Blessings of Having Faith

"So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them" (Mark 11:22-24).

Do you have any mountains that you need out of your way? Faith and prayer will do it. Let us pray in faith and accept God's will for us in every situation.

Day 13: The Hindrance

"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25).

Unforgiveness is a hindrance to receiving blessings from God. Holding on to grudges against people spoils our prayers. Let us pray for grace to be quick to forgive even if the guilty ones do not ask for forgiveness.

Day 14: Total Trust in God

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

"How often those who trusted the word of God, though in themselves utterly helpless, have withstood the power of the whole world—Enoch, pure in heart, holy in life, holding fast his faith in the triumph of righteousness against a corrupt and scoffing generation; Noah and his household against the men of his time, men of

the greatest physical and mental strength and the most debased in morals” (Education, p. 254).

Trusting God is an expression of our faith. It never disappoints. Let us pray for grace to keep on trusting the Lord.

Day 15: Faith and Surrender

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). There is no real surrender to God without faith. We need to have faith in God for us to surrender our lives totally to Him. Let us pray for continuous growth of our faith and trust in God.

Day 16: Victory Through Faith

“For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1John 5:4).

“Through faith in Christ, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.

"Ye are complete in Him." Colossians 2:10." (Education, p. 557).

May we all exercise our faith in God and receive victory over sin. Let us keep praying.

Victory Over Self

Day 17: The Power that Overcomes Self

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law” (Galatians 5: 22,23).

“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh”
(Galatians 5:16).

The Holy Spirit gives us self-control and every good thing both in this life and the life to come. Let us pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Day18: Overcoming Ungodly Desires

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works” (Titus 2:11-14).

Pray for power to overcome ungodly desires.

Day 19: The Needed Techniques

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:6-8).

Humility is beautiful to behold. Let us pray grace to humble ourselves.

Day 20: A Living Sacrifice

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:1,2).

“Righteousness by faith means not only forgiveness of sin but also newness of life. It includes sanctification as well as justification. God’s purpose is to restore sinners

completely, to make them fit to live in His presence” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*).

Let us pray that we may all reflect God in our lives.

Day 21: Scripture on Self-Centeredness

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others” (Philippians 2:3,4). The natural human nature pulls toward selfish ambitions and one’s interests. God is able to overcome our selfish human nature. The Lord does it to those who let Him.

Let us pray for victory over selfishness in every sense.

Day 22: Great Blessing

“Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him” (James 1:12).

“Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified” (1 Corinthians 9:25-27).

It is a blessing to have the endurance to remain loyal and trusting in God under trials. Let us pray for this spiritual strength.

Day 23: Being a Blessing to Others

“And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased” (Hebrews 13:16).

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

“Those who get the most good out of life, who feel the truest satisfaction, are those who receive to give. Those who live for self are always in want, for they are never satisfied. There is no Christianity in shutting our sympathies up in our own selfish hearts. We are to bring brightness and blessing into the lives of others. The Lord has chosen us as channels through which to communicate His blessings”
(22Manuscript 99,1902).

Among all the things we can give to others, let us pray for the courage to share Christ with others.

Day 24: Being of One Mind

“Finally, all *of you be* of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, *be* tenderhearted, *be* courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For

“He who would love life
And see good days,
Let him refrain his tongue from evil,
And his lips from speaking deceit.
Let him turn away from evil and do good;
Let him seek peace and pursue it.
For the eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous,
And His ears *are open* to their prayers;
But the face of the LORD *is* against those who do evil.” (1Peter 3:8-12).

As God’s people, let us pray for love and unity to God’s glory.

Spiritual Growth

Day 25: What is Spiritual Growth?

Spiritual growth is becoming more like Jesus. Christ is our example. Thus, the more we get transformed to be like Him, the more spiritually mature we become.

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age” (Titus 2:11-12).

Pray for spiritual growth.

Day 26: The Power Behind Spiritual Growth

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

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Day 27: More Picture of Jesus in You

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2Peter 1:5-8).

“Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His merits we appropriate the blessings of light, of peace, of joy in the Holy Ghost. And in view of the great things which Christ has done for us, we are ready to exclaim: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Brethren and sisters, it is by beholding that we become changed. By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour, by contemplating the perfection of the divine character and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image” ([Testimonies for the Church 5:744, 745](#)).

Pray that you will become more like Jesus daily.

Day 28: Surrender and Spiritual Growth

“Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God” (Hebrews 6:1).

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, “Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.” This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ” (Steps to Christ, p. 701).

Pray for total surrender to God.

Day 29: Overcoming Evil on the Journey

“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:16-21).

May God overcome all evil in our lives. Pray for His grace.

Day 30: Discernment and Spiritual Growth

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1John 4:1).

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

It is crucial to grow in truth. And since Satan and his agents are busy confusing and misleading people, it is necessary to pray for wisdom and discernment in our

spiritual growth. The Holy Spirit will provide all these. Let us pray for God's guidance in our spiritual walk with God.

Day 31: The Wise in God's Terms

“Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace” (James 3:13-18).

Let us ask God for true wisdom and that He will be seen in us all the time.

Day 32: What a Promise!

“The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,
He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
Those who are planted in the house of the LORD
Shall flourish in the courts of our God.
They shall still bear fruit in old age;
They shall be fresh and flourishing” (Psalm 92:12-14).
Amen. Thank God for His faithfulness.

Let us surrender our lives to God and allow for spiritual growth.

Our Mission

Day 33: The Great Commission to All

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age” (Mathew 28:19,20).

This command is as valid today as it was when Jesus gave it to the disciples. It is a command to every disciple of Jesus our Lord. How do you fulfil it in your life today? Pray about it.

Day 34: Emulating Jesus in Mission

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you” (1 Timothy 4:16).

Pray for grace to emulate Jesus in focusing on the salvation of others.

Day 35: The Powerful Word

“As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (John 17:18-21).

As we witness, let us emphasize the Word of God. Pray for others to surrender their lives to God, and unity in God’s people.

Day 36: Tell Them

“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:13-15).

Pray for that the Holy Spirit guides you in spreading the gospel.

Day 37: Shining the Light of the Gospel

“For so the Lord has commanded us:

‘I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,
That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth” (Acts 13:47).

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

Let us pray for courage and every grace to spread the gospel.

Day 38: Equipped for Service

“And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-15).

Pray that you will use your God given gift to serve the Lord and His people.

Day 39: Focusing on the Mission

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1,2) .

Pray for victory over every obstacle that blocks your path to spreading the gospel.

Day 40: Not in Vain

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Mathew 24:14).

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Revelation 7:9-10).

God will achieve His goal for which He sent His Son to die for the world. Pray that you will be among the saved to eternal life. Pray for others as well.