

The Devotional Life of the Church

Sabbath

Inspiration:

“Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?” Psalm 85:6.

“Christians should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise, and this preparation they should make by diligently studying the word of God, and striving to conform their lives to its precepts. . . . God calls for a revival and a reformation.” Prophets and Kings, 626.

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. Review and Herald, March 22, 1887.

Observation:

Pray for Revival. “A revival and reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from the spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit.” Review and Herald, Feb. 25, 1902.

Application:

1. Identify specific areas of your life that need revival and reformation.
2. Plan how you will use this renewal to impact your brothers and sisters at church.
3. Pray that the Holy Spirit will effect these changes in your life.
4. Start a list of special prayer requests.

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Sunday

“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 17:20-21.

“All need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit; all should refrain from censuring and disparaging remarks and draw near to Christ, that they may appreciate the heavy responsibilities which the co-workers with Him are carrying. ‘Press together; press together,’ are the words of our divine Instructor. Unity is strength; disunion is weakness and defeat.” Counsels on Health, 517.

Observation:

Pray for Unity in the Church.

1. Satan has learned that disunity effectively breaks the effectiveness of any church.
2. While we are diverse, our diversity must not be an excuse for disunity. The early church was united not **in** its diversity but **in spite of** its diversity.

Application:

1. Think of someone in the church with whom you disagree. Pray that the Lord will do for them and their family what you are praying He will do for you and yours.
2. Consider what the church would be like if everyone saw things from the same perspective. How do different points of view increase the potential of the body of Christ? When do different points of view inhibit it?
3. Be willing to give your personal testimony in prayer meeting or in your Sabbath school class of what the Lord is doing for you.

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Monday

Inspiration:

“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.” Ephesians 4:11-12.

“The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.” Gospel Workers, 352.

Observation:

Pray for the Pastor and the Church Officers.

- God has given the gifts of the Spirit to the church. Not everyone, however, has the same spiritual gift.
- God’s church is like an army, and like an army it must have organization. Church organization should maximize the various gifts of the members.
- The greatest in the Kingdom of God is the one who is servant of all.
- The Bible is clear that we must respect God-appointed authority.

Application:

1. Consider what your spiritual gift may be. Ask others what they think it might be.
2. Analyze how you are using your gift to build up the body of Christ.
3. Pray for the leaders of your church. A good time to do this is in your Sabbath school class. Don’t forget, the Bible says, “Smite the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.” Zechariah 13:7.

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Tuesday

Inspiration:

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6.

“Where is the flock that was given to you, your beautiful sheep?” Jeremiah 13:20.

“Dear brethren, as a church you have sadly neglected your duty toward the children and youth. While rules and restrictions are laid upon them, great care should be taken to show them the Christ-like side of your character and not the satanic side. Children need constant watch-care and tender love. Bind them to your hearts, and keep the love as well as the fear of God before them. . . . To restrain and caution your children is not all that is required.” Adventist Home, 309.

Observation:

Pray for Our Children and Youth.

1. Children and youth are not just the church of the future, they are part of the church of the present.
2. Children and youth become discouraged when older members don’t practice what they preach.
3. Those who work in the children and youth departments of the church are doing evangelism of the highest order. They are bringing our children and grandchildren to Jesus.

Application:

1. Next Sabbath visit one of the youth departments and tell a teacher how much you appreciate what they are doing.
2. At church next Sabbath make a point of being friendly to three young people. Learn their names.
3. Pray that God can use you to influence the children and youth for Christ.

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Wednesday

Inspiration:

“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.

“To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. It is in working to supply the necessities of others that we bring our souls into touch with the Source of all power. The Lord has marked every phase of missionary zeal that has been shown by His people in behalf of foreign fields. He designs that in every home, in every church, and at all the centers of the work, a spirit of liberality shall be shown in sending help to foreign fields, where the workers are struggling against great odds to give the light to those who sit in darkness.” Gospel Workers, 465.

Observation:

Pray for the Outreach Ministries of the Church.

- Those who emphasize working only for the lost at home will do less at home than those who have a vision for a world-wide work.
- We are often more concerned with making new members than we are with establishing them in the faith.

Application:

1. Discuss in your Sabbath School class the following question: If your church were to move to another location, would the old neighborhood miss it?
2. Get to know a new family in the church and pray for them by name.

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Thursday

Inspiration:

“Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2.

“No wonder that some become discouraged, linger by the way, and are left for wolves to devour. Satan is upon the track of all. He sends his agents forth to gather back to his ranks the souls he has lost. . . . Preaching is a small part of the work to be done for the salvation of souls. God's Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and He places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do. God requires His church to nurse those who are young in faith and experience, to go to them, not for the purpose of gossiping with them, but to pray, to speak unto them words that are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Evangelism, 351-352.

Observation:

Pray for the Discouraged and Backslidden.

- The church may go to great effort to win souls but often neglects them once they are baptized.
- A newly baptized person requires love and understanding. They are, after all, babes in Christ.
- A new believer is often shunned by his family and friends. Unless he is loved and accepted by his church, he will likely not last long in the faith.
- Becoming a Seventh-day Adventist in lifestyle requires time and patience.

Application:

1. Ask the pastor who in the church might be in need of encouragement.
2. Chose several families. Visit them if possible and pray with them and for them.

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Friday

Inspiration:

“Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails.” Psalm 71:9.

“Rise up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord.” Leviticus 19:32.

“The most tender regard should be cherished for those whose life interest has been bound up with the work of God. These aged workers have stood faithful amid storm and trial. They may have infirmities, but they still possess talents that qualify them to stand in their place in God's cause. Though worn, and unable to bear the heavier burdens that younger men can and should carry, the counsel they can give is of the highest value.” Reflecting Christ, 280.

Observation:

Pray for the Senior Members.

- Old age may well represent the heaviest burden of life on this earth.
- The Western cultures tend to marginalize the aged in favor of the youth culture.
- The later years are often filled with loneliness, poor health, and a perception of uselessness.

Application:

1. Read Ecclesiastes 12. The chapter describes the hardships of old age.
2. Ask the church clerk to give you the names and addresses of some of the shut-in members of the church.
3. Begin to pray for them and make definite plans to visit them and pray with them. They would also be pleased if you would study the Sabbath school lesson with them.