

Women's Ministries
International Day of Prayer

March 7, 2009

Prayer—and Love's Languages

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Printed by: Brazil Publishing House



Prepared by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist
Women's Ministries Department

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My Dear Sisters:

The time has come once again for us to focus on the importance of prayer in our lives and in this ministry. This packet, "Prayer – and Love's Languages" was written and compiled by Soledad Alvarez de Sanchez from South American Division, focuses on the importance of spending time with God each day through prayer – and love's languages.

Ellen G. White writes "Praying together will bind hearts to God in bonds that will endure..." Testimonies for the Church p175. In these days of uncertainty, trials, fear, and turmoil; prayer has become vital to our daily existence and peace of mind. The promise in these words surely gives us courage to face each day knowing that God binds us to Himself and nothing and no one can sever that bond.

As Women's Ministries Leaders the task is yours to encourage your sisters to have a deep and meaningful relationship with God. And what better way to begin than with prayer. The task we have been called to do in touching hearts and telling the world about Jesus is great and it is only by binding our hearts to God's heart will we receive the power we need for this time.

This year we are asking that you pray for your sisters in the North American Division, the Northern Asia-Pacific Division, and the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. In particular we seek your prayers in the areas of family challenges, single women, single parents, and widows. You can visit our website at <http://wm.gc.adventist.org> and find out more about the work in these and other divisions of our world church.

Remember, God is our comfort and our best friend in all times. "We need not keep our own record of trials and difficulties, griefs, and sorrows. All these things are written in the books, and heaven will take care of them." Gospel Workers, 477

Blessings and joy to you,

Heather-Dawn Small

Director

SUGGESTED ORDER OF SERVICE
Women's Ministries Day of Prayer
March 7, 2009

Prelude

Platform participants enter

Doxology

Invocation

Offertory

Offering Response

Offertory Prayer

Responsive Reading

Hymn: _____

Intercessory Prayer

Children's Story
God Delights in Your Worship

Special Music

SERMON – Prayer—and Love's Languages

Congregational Hymn

Benediction

Postlude

Children's Story
"God Delights in Your Worship"
Title Options: Jesus, I love you!
Who should we worship?
Worshipping Jesus

How do you show your mom and dad that you love them? How do they know that you really love them? What things do you do to show them your love?

How about your mom? How does she feel when you tell her "I love you mommy?" Does she feel happy?

You know, Jesus also likes it when you show your love for Him in the same way you show your parents.

Showing Jesus our love is called "worship." Jesus also likes to feel loved.

NOTE: Take a dictionary and read the meaning of the word worship.

Worship: To honor or reverence as a divine being or supernatural power; to regard with great or extravagant respect, honor, or devotion.

The Bible teaches us that our worship should only be demonstrated to the true God and to Jesus, the Son of God.

NOTE: Take the most exquisite bottle of perfume you can find, with the best fragrance, and put some on each of the children so they can smell it. Be aware of the possibility of allergies to perfume.

Which story in the Bible does this perfume remind you of? The story is found in the book of Mark, Chapter 14, verses 3 and 9.

It's the story of a woman who did something that surprised Jesus, his disciples, and all the guests at the big dinner. (Read the text.)

Why did Mary Magdalene spend so much money to buy perfume? Because, without a doubt, she was very, very grateful for everything Jesus had done for her. It was a way for her to show her love for her Savior. She did it because she wanted to please, honor, and worship the Lord Jesus.

Mary Magdalene wanted Jesus to know how much she loved Him. She wanted Him to know that she was willing to do anything for her Savior.

Doing something just to please Jesus is called "worship."

What can you do to please Jesus? (Allow some children to respond)

What Jesus expects from you is easier to do than you think. It's easier than any of the things you just said.

Jesus expects you to love Him and tell Him that you love Him. He wants you to show Him that you love Him. He wants you to say that you love Him more than anything else in the world in words and in everything that you do.

Do you want to tell Jesus today how much you love Him? Who wants to say...

"Jesus, I love you!"

Again:

"Jesus, I love you!"

One more time:

"Jesus, I love you!"

We are going to worship Jesus now by saying a prayer, because praying is another way we can worship Him.

Boys and girls, don't forget that Jesus likes to feel loved by everyone, just like your mommy and daddy like to feel loved.

Never forget this. It pleases Jesus and makes Him happy.

Let's pray.

NOTE: Say a short prayer with words of praise and thankfulness to Jesus.

Sermon

Prayer—and Love's Languages

Main Text:

"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him." (John 4:23)

Introduction:

Were you aware that we are like God?

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.'" (Genesis 1:26)

Could you claim today that you are the image of God and the Lord Jesus? A positive response to that question may seem a little conceited. However, in spite of more than 6,000 years of sin, we somehow retain some of God's image.

The essence of God's character is love. God is love, and He created us with the ability to love and be loved. Although our ability to love is very small in comparison to God's great heart of love, we are like Him in this.

Dr. Gary Chapman, in his book *The Five Love Languages*, explains that love should be expressed in the "language," i.e., the manner the other person understands. After extensive research, he defines "The Five Love Languages" as follows: 1) Words of Affirmation; 2) Quality Time; 3) Giving Gifts; 4) Acts of Service; and 5) Physical Touch. He reminds us that we need to show our love using all five of these languages. All are important, but for each individual, one is most important and is called the "*primary language*."

Considering that we are like God, our Creator, we can grow spiritually as we learn to show our love for God using the five love languages.

1. The first way we can show Him our love is with Words of Affirmation:

What words of affirmation does God want to hear most coming from my lips? Do I express my love in prayers of affirmation? When was the last time I showed my appreciation for God in words? Do my prayers contain words of appreciation, praise, and worship, such as: You are Great and Sublime! Blessed and loving Father! There is no other God more glorious than the Lord! He is Sovereign, King of kings and Lord of lords! Let us learn to **fill** our prayers with His praise.

1.1 An expert on the use of love languages, without a doubt, is King David. For example: "I will love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies." (Psalm 18:1-3) This is worship! With good reason, God said of David "*I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.*" (Acts 13:22)

Do your prayers reflect the language of love, telling God what He means to you?

2. A second language of love is Quality Time

We often show love to others by spending quality time with them. But do we make it a point to spend quality time with God, seeking Him in prayer and giving Him our total and complete attention? During our special prayer time, do we share our deepest thoughts with Him? Do we listen quietly so that God can tell us His will and reveal His love, dreams, and plans for our lives?

This love language, *quality time*, is vital to a deepening relationship with God. Our prayer time must be quality time with our Heavenly Father

We often refer to this love language as being "Alone with God," having "Personal Devotions," "A Moment with God," or "The Peaceful Time," etc. These are moments of intimacy with God through prayer, praise, and the study of His Word.

2.2 This language also expresses itself when we worship God through hymns of praise that tell of God's greatness and majesty. Is there anything better than saying "I Will Always Love You, Jesus!" through beautiful musical praise? Prayer and praise enrich our quality time.

"If you want to see God's miraculous power working in you life, spend quality time in prayer. (*Passion for Prayer*, p. 10)

3. Physical Touch is another language of love.

How can we reach the heart of God? How can we touch God? It is true that we cannot literally do so, but through prayer, praise, reflection, and immersing ourselves in His word, we can draw near to Him. It is through faith that we can reach out to the Creator of the universe.

3.1 (If possible, dramatize this part. It will be more interesting and enrich the sermon) The woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment felt a strong impulse to do so because of her faith. She believed that Jesus could cure her. She believed that Jesus had the power to free her from her illness and this made her run the risk of going near the Master.

She believed in the power that emanated from a compassionate and merciful God. She believed that just by touching the hem of His garment, she would be cured. "Lord, just a small portion of you, a small portion of your power. This small portion will cure me, it will restore me, and it will be my salvation. I don't deserve more than a small portion of Your infinite love. Just a small portion of your Holy power, Lord, is sufficient. Just to touch the hem of Your garment!" Now that's faith!

3.2 This faith touched Jesus. It touched Him in such a way that He stopped the crowd that pressed around Him and asked, "Who touched me?" This touch of faith could not go unnoticed. Jesus had to teach us how to reach out to Him. This is the kind of faith that saves, heals, restores, gives meaning to life, and gives us the will to live. A desire that blossoms from a heart in extreme need of God.

3.3 This is a question that resonates in the mind and heart of the Creator today: "Who touched me?" The answer is a profound sigh of sadness that comes from the Throne of God in words such as these: "These people honor me with their lips, but the heart is far from Me."

3.4 The second way to touch Jesus is through worship. It is through worship that we can express what is in our hearts. In the book *Passion for Prayer*, we find the following description: "Come with us on an imaginary voyage to an enchanting nursing home. Sitting alone in the main room, we see a man with white hair and a distinguished look about him. It is obvious that he feels lonely. The nurses take care of all his needs, but no one sits next to him and talks to him. We find out that he is the founder of the nursing home. He has several children, but they rarely visit him. They call every once in a while, but don't talk to him much. No one touches him. Do you know who this is? It's God."

3.5 Can we touch God? Yes, of course we can touch God. We can touch Him through a passionate prayer, an outcry from our soul, a song of love, or a life of devotion.

Would you like to touch God? May your response be: "Yes, I want to learn to truly worship Him. I want my prayers to reach His Majesty and show just how much I love Him."

4. Giving Gifts

How can we show our love to God through the language of giving gifts? Someone who is poor may say, "I'm lost! I don't have anything of value to offer God." On the other hand, someone who is self-confident might make a list of things to give to God, such as talents, a voice that sings in tune, a spiritual sermon, a career, a family, being a good steward, etc.

4.1 The best gift we can offer our Savior is a heart full of love for Him. This gift will surely delight the heart of God. Our prayers of praise will continually be lifted like an expensive perfume in thanks to Him.

4.2 The Bible mentions a woman who expressed her love with a gift. She could not find any other way to demonstrate her love and gratitude except through giving a gift. Jesus accepted her gift. This woman was Mary Magdalene, and her story is found in Mark 14:3-9 (read the text).

The value of the perfume was about \$700, an amount it would take a laborer six months to earn.

4.3 This gift of love was an act of worship. Jesus understood the meaning of the gift. This was the testament of gratitude that Mary Magdalene gave her Savior.

What gifts can we bring to our creator? We may not even know how to answer that. But as we pray earnestly for wisdom, the Holy Spirit will guide us. We will know how to show our love through our gifts. We will know how to respond to our loving God, because He gave us everything, for love!

"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

5. Love is made visible by Acts of Service

Perhaps we best understand God's love as we understand that service is a language of love.

5.1 One of the greatest manifestations of this language is Jesus Christ. The Bible says in Matthew 20:28 "...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." His entire life was a constant surrendering to service. How then, can I show my love through acts of service? In my daily prayer time, I can pray specifically for the Holy Spirit to lead me to someone I can serve today. I can pray for wisdom to evaluate my gifts in order to find the field where I am best qualified to serve God and His children.

I can be alert for opportunities to serve my neighbor, for Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me." (Matthew 25:40)

5.2 To serve others as our faithful service to God is truly to worship, because it is the spontaneous response to the saving grace of Christ that translates into service: "Freely you have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8)

6 How do we respond to God's love?

6.2 God is love and needs us to show our love. It is not enough to say, "God knows that I love Him!"

"Our Redeemer thirsts for recognition. He hungers for the sympathy and love of those whom He has purchased with His own blood. He longs with inexpressible desire that they should come to Him and have life." (*Desire of Ages*, p. 191)

6.3 Have you worshiped God today? How have you shown your love to Him today? Let's worship Him now in prayer!

NOTE: 1. Before the service, make plans with the pianist or the sound engineer to play background music. 2. Ask everyone to show their love to God in prayer, with heads bowed, standing or kneeling. 3. Give a few minutes for prayer and conclude with a strong "Amen!"

6.4 Why does God long for us to show our love? Because, like the old man in the nursing home, He feels lonely. Because His people forget who He is. Because His children don't have time to visit him. Or if they find time, it's only once a week, attending church on Sabbath, feeling they have fulfilled their obligation. They did not relate to Him, or seek to communicate with Him before rushing home. The visit ended. His children didn't even come close enough to touch the hem of His garment!

6.5 God wants His children to worship Him in love.. He wants them to get close enough to “touch” His heart. We can learn to show God our love, reverence, worship, and adoration.

7. Does God care if we adore Him?

The Bible says in Deuteronomy 10:12:

“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”

7.1 If He didn’t care, He would not have devoted the first four commandments to remind us how important it is to Him that we worship Him.

7.2 Maybe we have forgotten to obey these commandments because they were written in a negative form. The phrase “You shall not” in the Ten Commandments, may make them seem prohibitive and harsh. You shall have no other gods before me. However, for every “no” in the Ten Commandments, there is an implicit “yes” that tells us: Yes, worship the true God. Worship God. He is worthy. Call Him and tell Him how much you love Him. Bless His holy and sacred name. Touch Him with gratitude, songs, and prayers. Do it out of your love for God!

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)

Conclusion:

Worship is a deeply personal experience. It is the expression of a heart filled with love for our Savior.

Jesus told us, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” (John 4:23)

Remember that God is seeking His children who will worship Him in love. On this World Day of Prayer, let us show our love in the languages of love; let us worship Him in prayer and praise.

Let us repeat what the Psalmist David wrote:

“While I live, I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.” (Psalm 146:2)

Make a Joyful Noise

Leader: Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

Congregation: **Know that the LORD, He *is* God; *It is* He *who* has made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture.**

Leader: Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *and* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name.

All: **For the LORD *is* good; His mercy *is* everlasting, and His truth *endures* to all generations.**

Psalm 100