

Prayer Outline 1: Pioneer Prayer

June 23-29, 2019

Directions: One day this week, in the sanctuary, outside under some trees, in a comfortable room that offers privacy and no distractions, or on a conference call, take turns reading the “Testimony Handout.” The group leader will assign the prayer topics below to members of the group, or ask members which prayer topics they would like to pray for. Volunteers should write their initials on the blanks before their topics and the group leader should write them too. The group leader may open prayer by thanking God for every person in the room and asking that each heart will be blessed. Before someone prays for a topic, they should try and agree with the previous one. The prayer topics below are taken from the “Testimony Handout.” Please keep individual prayers short, or less than two minutes.

1. _____ Pray for us to recognize our mission to save perishing sinners and show God’s love to men.
2. _____ Pray that we carry God’s truth for this time to the dark corners of the earth and begin by sharing God’s truth at home.
3. _____ Pray that our Father will help everyone, from simple Christians to leaders of the church who bear great responsibility, to work with Christ.
4. _____ Pray that the love of the world and the cares of this life would not separate our souls from God.
5. _____ Pray that the water of life would be in us and flow out from us to others.
6. _____ Pray that we would increase our efforts to bring others to the knowledge of the truth, that our lives be characterized by exertion and sacrifices to do others good.

[3-5 min. Open Prayer Time; Song leader sings first verse of SDA Hymn #633 to end open prayer time]

7. _____ Pray that we would have the spirit of heaven to minister to those who are wretched and every way inferior in character and rank.
8. _____ Pray that we accept the principles of the cross of the Christ to deny self, to impart light to others, and give of our means to extend the Your light to others.
9. _____ Pray that God will help us to not have a selfish love for the world’s perishable things.
10. _____ Pray for divine wisdom to work according to God’s plan.
11. _____ Pray that God will help us to become great workers and have benevolence.
12. _____ Pray that 1000 prayer groups per division would start by General Conference Session, June 25, 2020.

[3-5 min. Open Prayer Time; Song leader sings second verse of SDA Hymn #633 to end open prayer time]

13. _____ Pray that the *Testimonies for the Church* may be introduced to every member of the church.
14. _____ Pray for God’s Spirit to bless local churches, conferences, unions, divisions, and General Conference departments.
15. _____ Pray for the Holy Spirit to bless those planning Annual Council 2019 and General Conference Session 2020.
16. _____ Pray for the Holy Spirit to bless the delegates of General Conference Session 2020.
17. _____ Pray for God’s Spirit to bless visitors, logistics, services, and business sessions of GC Session 2020.

[3-5 min. Open Prayer Time – Thanksgiving and Praise; Finish SDA Hymn #633; Leader Closes Prayer.]

Testimony Handout 1 for Pioneer Prayer

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3, pp. 379-388

June 23-29, 2019

The mission of the church of Christ is to save perishing sinners. It is to make known the love of God to men and to win them to Christ by the efficacy of that love. The truth for this time must be carried into the dark corners of the earth, and this work may begin at home. The followers of Christ should not live selfish lives; but, imbued with the Spirit of Christ, they should work in harmony with Him.

There are causes for the present coldness and unbelief. The love of the world and the cares of life separate the soul from God. The water of life must be in us, and flowing out from us, springing up into everlasting life. We must work out what God works in. If the Christian would enjoy the light of life, he must increase his efforts to bring others to the knowledge of the truth. His life must be characterized by exertion and sacrifices to do others good; and then there will be no complaints of lack of enjoyment.

Angels are ever engaged in working for the happiness of others. This is their joy. That which selfish hearts would consider humiliating service, ministering to those who are wretched and in every way inferior in character and rank, is the work of the pure, sinless angels in the royal courts of heaven. The spirit of Christ's self-sacrificing love is the spirit which pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss.

Those who feel no special pleasure in seeking to be a blessing to others, in working, even at a sacrifice, to do them good, cannot have the spirit of Christ or of heaven; for they have no union with the work of heavenly angels and cannot participate in the bliss that imparts elevated joy to them. Christ has said: "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." If the joy of angels is to see sinners repent, will it not be the joy of sinners, saved by the blood of Christ, to see others repent and turn to Christ through their instrumentality? In working in harmony with Christ and the holy angels we shall experience a joy that cannot be realized aside from this work.

The principle of the cross of Christ brings all who believe under heavy obligations to deny self, to impart light to others, and to give of their means to extend the light. If they are in connection with heaven they will be engaged in the work in harmony with the angels.

The principle of worldlings is to get all they can of the perishable things of this life. Selfish love of gain is the ruling principle in their lives. But the purest joy is not found in riches nor where covetousness is always craving, but where contentment reigns and where self-sacrificing love is the ruling principle. There are thousands who are passing their lives in indulgence and whose hearts are filled with repining. They are victims of selfishness and discontent in the vain effort to satisfy their minds with indulgence. But unhappiness is stamped upon their very countenances, and behind them is a desert, because their course is not fruitful in good works.

In proportion as the love of Christ fills our hearts and controls our lives, covetousness, selfishness, and love of ease will be overcome, and it will be our pleasure to do the will of Christ, whose servants we claim to be. Our happiness will then be proportionate to our unselfish works, prompted by the love of Christ.

Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed. He that gives to the needy blesses others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree. God could have reached His object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but He knew that man could not be happy without acting a part in the great work in which he would be cultivating self-denial and benevolence.

That man might not lose the blessed results of benevolence, our Redeemer formed the plan of enlisting him as His co-worker. By a chain of circumstances which would call forth his charities, He bestows upon man the best means of cultivating benevolence and keeps him habitually giving to help the poor and to advance His cause. He sends His poor as the representatives of Himself. By their necessities a ruined world are drawing forth from us talents of means and of influence to present to them the truth, of which they are in perishing need. And as we heed these calls by labor and by acts of benevolence we are assimilated to the image of Him who for our sakes became poor. In bestowing we bless others, and thus accumulate true riches.

There has been a great lack of Christian benevolence in the church. Those who were the best able to do for the advancement of the cause of God have done but little. God has mercifully brought a class to the knowledge of the truth, that they might appreciate its priceless value in comparison with earthly treasures. Jesus has said to these: "Follow Me." He is testing them with an invitation to the supper which He has prepared. He is watching to see what characters they will develop, whether their own selfish interests will be considered of greater value than eternal riches. Many of these dear brethren are now by their actions framing the excuses mentioned in the following parable:

"Then said He unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at suppertime to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind."

This parable correctly represents the condition of many professing to believe the present truth. The Lord has sent them an invitation to come to the supper which He has prepared for them at great cost to Himself; but worldly interests look to them of greater importance than the heavenly treasure. They are invited to take part in things of eternal value; but their farms, their cattle, and their home interests seem of so much greater importance than obedience to the heavenly invitation that they overpower every divine attraction, and these earthly things are made the excuse for their disobedience to the heavenly command, "Come; for all things are now ready." These brethren are blindly following the example of those represented in the parable. They look at their worldly possessions, and say: No, Lord, I cannot follow Thee; "I pray Thee have me excused."