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# Cast Your Bread Upon the Waters

Some prayers are like ‘casting your bread upon the waters.’ (See Ecclesiastes 11:1) You never know what will become of them. If you are fishing, you know what you would like to happen to it!! But God promises, ‘after many days you will find it again.’ God is faithful, His word will not return to Him empty. (See Isaiah 55:11)

In Australia, the old Dial-a-Prayer continued for about 35 years, then slowly slipped away into obscurity. In that time it is true to say that millions of Australians dialled their local Dial-a-Prayer number. We will never know the results – not fully anyway!! There was no follow up to the service.

But now that the new Dial-a-Prayer is being promoted and is catching on, the stories are coming in.

Like Anna: In the eighties she worked in a solicitor’s office in Sydney – high pressure and stressful. Every work day for about four years she rang Dial-a-Prayer, and that is what gave her peace and calm and helped her survive. She moved to Queensland and after some life trauma met an Adventist man. She was a practicing Anglican, and he a practicing Adventist. The day of rest was an issue. Together they spoke with her Anglican priest. His response: “Saturday is the Sabbath. My family and I keep every Sabbath at home, and then on Sunday I work as a priest. Go ahead and marry with my blessing!!” Today they are committed faithful Seventh-day Adventists.

Or Bill: As a young man he experimented with drugs and travelled overseas. In a ‘far away land’ he spent his life on all the wrong things. Drugged and in the pits, he was flown home to Australia by a friend. Back in Melbourne, his drugged-out lifestyle continued.

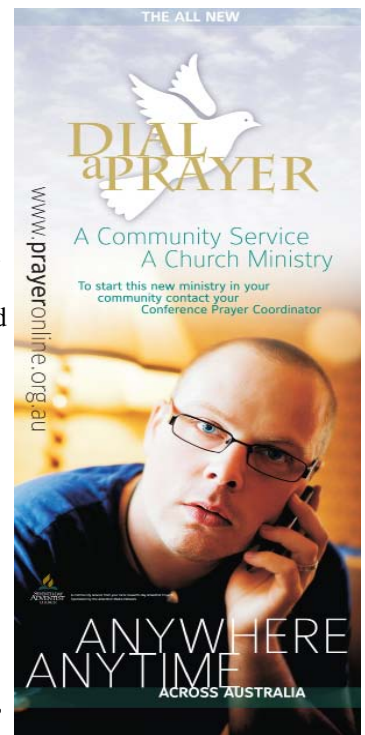
It all happened one afternoon in February of 1980 after he rolled a joint and was spaced out. To relax he played the piano and found himself playing an old hymn. He stopped and switched back to his usual music. Three times this happened and it freaked him out. It was as if a voice said ‘have a good look at yourself.’ He did, and did not like what he saw. He crumpled on the floor and cried his heart out and pleaded, ‘Please help me God! If you are real help me!’ Amid his tears he remembered Dial-a-Prayer. He found the number and rang it. He writes: “We had often joked about it, but today I was very serious as I dialled the number to hear an elderly man praying a very stuffy and formal prayer, that to me on that Friday night in 1980, was a truly heavenly transaction!” “I knew that something had changed – a portal had opened for me and I was aware that God was a reality and I was not alone . . . From that moment, the channels have been opened to me to communicate with God.”

His journey from that time on was with God. Today he is in full time ministry as the pastor of the City Life congregation in the centre of Frankston Victoria, where he ministers to the needy, providing meals and counsel to those entrapped in drug addictions.

And Dial-a-Prayer was used of God in a mighty way to turn this brother towards home.

The new Dial-a-Prayer is here. Anywhere, anytime across Australia, seekers can hear a prayer. But it is more than a community service – it is a local church ministry. Every prayer finishes with this invitation:

Dial-a-Prayer is brought to you by Seventh-day Adventist Christians in your area. Today’s prayer may not have met your needs at this time. If you have a need and would like personal prayer, a Dial-a-Prayer supporter can phone you. Press one (1) on your phone keypad now to give details. Or to finish, simply hang up.



But we need prayer supporters across the conferences for this follow-up prayer ministry. To get access to the members pages of the prayer website to learn more about the new Dial-a-Prayer and train for this ministry, send your request to [DAP@adventistmedia.org.au](mailto:DAP@adventistmedia.org.au)

“Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field.” Matthew 9:38

John Gate  
Director, Media Ministries

## Does God hear our prayers?

Yes, I believe He does.

Does God answer our prayers? Yes, I believe He answers, but not in the manner or timing of our limited vision.

I recently had this belief reconfirmed. My family have been struggling for some time with a situation which is both ongoing and seemingly unresolvable. Day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, we have prayed for and about this problem. After a particularly difficult morning at work, I finally sat down for a late lunch and took a moment to have some quiet time. On my computer is a copy of the Bible. After searching through a few options for something to read to help lift my sagging spirits, I felt impressed to simply read one of the many New Testament stories. As it was nearing Christmas I turned to the early chapters of the book of Luke.

I have read these passages many times, but this time I wasn't reading it from the source I usually use, and from pages whose format I was familiar with. Luke 1:7 (NIV), "But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years", and Luke 1:13 (NIV) "But the angel said to him: 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son....'" As I read, it was as if everything except these words disappeared from the page.

A light illuminated my weary mind and with new vision I re-read the lines. Elizabeth and Zechariah were both old, "well along in years" the verse stated. The angel said that their prayer had been heard. What prayer? The prayer for a child was what immediately came to my mind. But, the couple were old. So how long ago had that prayer been uttered? Probably many years before, when Elizabeth was of child bearing age.

God did hear their prayer. The angel said so. And He did answer. His answer to this particular request was "yes; but not in your time - in Mine." It was an answer the couple had to wait for. An answer which the angel Gabriel himself would announce at the appropriate time.

I have since read that there is some debate about whether the prayer that Zechariah had answered was a prayer for a child, or a prayer for Messiah to come. I do not claim any scholarly status. All I know is that at a time when I needed encouragement, I was directed by the Holy Spirit to these verses in Luke and the words as I have just written about literally jumped up in front of my eyes, together with the interpretation. These words brought me comfort and strength.

Was my family's prayer answered that day? No. Has our prayer been answered yet? No it hasn't. I have no idea when it will be answered. I just know that on a particular day, for a particular need, I was given a glimpse into the working of Almighty God on my, and my family's behalf. I was not given specific information about God's timing, only that He was working on the problem. And, as the weary days roll on there will be more times when my spirits will flag low. But the words that I read will be there in the back of my mind, as an echo of the promise God made to me that day, encouraging me again and again to trust – implicitly trust in the One who sees, knows, sympathises, and has planned for, all events in my life.

~ Diana Tanner

## PRAYER MINISTRIES

South Pacific Division of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Resources on offer

*Christian Meditation Brochure*

How to meditate on the Word, on God, on Scripture,

On the Testimonies

*Email Prayer Chain*

Be part of the Tuesday email connection with

Prayer requests

*Open Doors*

A global ministry that responds to the needs of persecuted

Christians in 45 nations

*Prayer for Schools booklet*

Guidelines on how to begin a Prayer ministry for your school

*Prayer Journal*

Prayer journal for adults, for children

*Prayer Pack (\$7.00)*

For suggestions, how to start, resources

*Uplink*

Quarterly newsletter with suggestions, stories, inspiration

For more information or details on any of the above items, please send your name and address by email to :

[ernajohnson@adventist.org.au](mailto:ernajohnson@adventist.org.au)

or [malbert@adventist.org.au](mailto:malbert@adventist.org.au)



## Prayer of Awakening

Father, I am suddenly aware of a weakness that has hindered me for years and has kept me from embracing my purpose in life. God, I hear Your Word. I believe Your Word. But I do not confess Your Word. Society has taught me to avoid accountability, so I have learned the fine art of indifference.

Yes, Lord, that is why I am not completely delivered!  
Yes, Lord, that is why I am not empowered and free!  
Today, I forsake indifference and arise to own this Word, possess this Word, and release this Word through my mouth in the name of Jesus. I am determined to come in line with Your will for my life.

Lord, I know that as I agree with Your Word and Your will for my life, I am connecting with my divine purpose and forsaking a life of misery. Thank You for the peace, joy, happiness, and fulfillment that come with connecting with Your purpose. Thank You for a new heart and committed will to travel my directed path in life. Amen.

- Jackie McCullough

105 Days of Prayer, pg 21



# It ALL comes down to One Thing



*“You, Lord, give perfect peace to those who keep their purpose firm and put their trust in You”.*

Isaiah 26:3 (GNT)

One of the most significant steps you can make toward leading a simple life is acknowledging one simple truth -- God is God, and you are not. This may sound simplistic, but trusting God with all you have, all you are, and all you'd love to do in this life is a choice you have to make each and every day.

Trusting God lets you put faith into action. It's like a child faced with taking the training wheels off of her first two-wheeler. Looking at the instability of the bike and knowing her own lack of experience makes the task daunting. But encouraged by the gentle push of a loving parent who promises not to let her fall, she is able to conquer her fears and move forward in faith.

Taking off the training wheels of your own resources and abilities means trusting God enough to let Him lead you in new directions. To do this, you need to act on what God asks you to do, whether through the Bible or personally in prayer. Acting on what God asks you to do will help you mature in areas such as loving others unconditionally, giving generously, working diligently, praying consistently, and handling what God has given you responsibly.

Just like riding a bike feels increasingly more effortless as time goes by, so will trusting God. As you continue to take God at His Word and find Him faithful, your grip on what is unnecessary will begin to loosen, further simplifying your life. Your wholehearted, childlike trust will help you let go of possessions that hold an empty promise of contentment.

God knows the journey that lies ahead of you. He wants you to experience the joy and freedom that is found in trusting Him with every detail of your life. Putting your abilities, fears, cares, and future into His hands releases you to live the eternal adventure of a full, yet simple, life.

## *One final thought*

*The essence of the simple life is trusting God to help you make the most of each and every day in a way that honors Him.*

Simple Living for you: Book

## Prayer Website: Answered Prayer --

Here's an answered prayer to uplift you, from a teacher:

'I asked you to pray for me to get rid of the anxiety I feel before teaching my first classes every quarter. I said I know the subject, I prepare myself and always felt very insecure and anxious.

### **How God Answered My Prayer:**

Today was my first class and I was so confident, happy, open to my students, the Holy Spirit was inside my classroom. Thank you so much for being here for me. God bless this site and all who are praying for us. Amen'  
~ Angela.

Praise God for His answers.



## Encourage those who are beginning to step out in prayer:

Find ways to support people as they step out in prayer with greater boldness. People will have different passions in their prayer lives. Some will appreciate reflective, meditative prayers. Others will be growing in "crying out" kinds of prayers. Still others will be passionate about worshipful prayers. Teach your intercessors that God is bringing many different streams to form one mighty river of intercession, and release them to pray as God leads. — Carol Madison



‘Our life is like a garden, and with God’s loving care it blossoms with the flowers of His blessings everywhere’.

*15 Minutes Alone with God, pg 122  
Emilie Barnes*

## Why Pray?

God is looking for individuals, men and women, who will “stand in the gap,” and will get to know Him—men and women who will intercede.

We have a God who looks for us. In the Garden, God went to look for His two lost children. Even though He knew exactly where they were, He went to look for them. It was important to Him to be with His children then, and He still wants to be with His children today.

It’s hard to imagine that we have a God who goes seeking for us. He knows where we are, what we are doing, even what we are thinking. And why? He will do whatever it takes to get our attention and help us discover that His view of us is the same as that evening in Eden when He went to look for His first children.

The message of His heart for us is personal:  
 “I have been looking for you.”  
 “You are a very special to Me.”  
 “I have a specific purpose for you.”

Some might ask, “Why pray, if God already knows all about me and my needs?”

He wants us to get to know Him. The purpose of prayer is to enable us to come into His presence, where we are changed. It frees His hand to do more in our lives and in the lives of those for whom we pray. Someone has said, “God rules the world through the prayers of His people.” Christ actually meant prayer to be the great power by which His church should do its work.

Prayer doesn’t change God, prayer changes us. It is not to tell God what He already knows; it is to venture into His presence so He can help us understand what He already sees.

Is prayer always practical? Can its outcome be measured??

Prayer is a practical experience. Someone has said that “When we work, we work, but when we pray, God works!” In the great controversy between good and evil, God has chosen to be responsive to the prayers of His people. The record is clear: when God’s people pray the sun is stopped in its tracks, walls fall down, sinners become saints, enemies are put to flight, families are brought together, worries are put under His banner of healing. How’s that for measurable?

Granted, sometimes God is more subtle. Not all prayers are answered as we desire or on our timetable. But He is too great to invite us to pray and then to ignore us when we do.

## PRAYER CALENDAR 2009

May 15	National Family Day
May 25-31	National Family Week
May 26	Sorry day (Australia)
May 30	Day of Thanksgiving in Australia
June 20	World Refugee Day

## Small THOUGHTS...

‘Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.’

*2 Corinthians 1: 3 - 4*

*Compassionate Father, thank you that You want to comfort me in all my difficulties. Console me in such a way that I will want to share Your comfort with others*

~ Mary Barrett

*Little Prayers for Tough times*  
pg 6.

‘Christ is “the Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6), and it is His mission to restore to earth and heaven the peace that sin has broken. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). Whoever consents to renounce sin and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace’.

*God’s Amazing Grace, pg 320.*  
~ Ellen White

‘Every step in life may bring us closer to Jesus, may give us a deeper experience of His love, and may bring us one step nearer to the blessed home of peace. Then let us not cast away our confidence, but have firm assurance, firmer than ever before.’

- Ellen White  
*Steps to Christ, pg 125.*



continued...

It is interesting to observe that many of the great preachers in Christian history—those who were instrumental in changing entire nations such as Spurgeon, Finney, and Moody—were blessed with intercessors, those who lifted them constantly before God’s throne, pleading for the Holy Spirit’s power on their ministry. That raises the question of who had the most valuable part to play, the preachers or the intercessors through whom God empowered them?

Perhaps that raises a final question: Is God looking for you? Is God calling you to the role of intercessor in His end-time church?

*Women’s Ministries Leadership Certification, Level 2 – Prayer Ministries*

Published by the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.  
 Editor: Erna Johnson; [ernajohnson@adventist.org.au](mailto:ernajohnson@adventist.org.au)  
 Layout/Design: Maria Albert; [malbert@adventist.org.au](mailto:malbert@adventist.org.au)