

40 Days

Instruction Manual

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40 Days Instruction Manual

(To Be Used With the 40 Days Prayer and Devotional Book)

What is the 40 Days of Prayer and Devotional Study?

The *40 Days* devotional book for study and prayer emphasis is designed to prepare God's church for Christ's second coming as well as reach out to others in preparation for that glorious event. This preparation begins with church members who are willing to commit to 40 days of prayer and devotional study in order to develop a closer personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and reach out to five (5) individuals who the Lord has put on their heart to pray for every day for 40 days.

Jesus said, "...if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 18:19). There is great power in united prayer. There is also encouragement and spiritual strength found in Christian fellowship. Because of these truths it is suggested that the participants find a prayer partner to fellowship with and pray together with either on the phone or in person every day during the 40 days of prayer and study.

In order to get the greatest benefit from this 40 day emphasis it is recommended that each participant find several individuals to join together with in using the *40 Days* devotional and prayer book. It would be well for the participants to meet weekly as a group to share and pray together. As mentioned above, each participant needs to choose one in the group to become their daily fellowship prayer partner (this is very important). Each participant in the group needs to do the same in order to receive the greatest blessings during the 40 days.

The *40 Days* devotional studies are divided into five sections with eight devotionals in each section. The five sections are: (I) The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, (II) Spirit Baptism and Prayer, (III) Spirit Baptism and Evangelism, (IV) Spirit Baptism and Abiding in Christ, and (V) Spirit Baptism and Fellowship. Each devotional study is followed by personal reflection and discussion questions, and a prayer focus for that day, which includes a "prayer verse."

The *40 Days* devotional book has four Appendixes (A, B, C, D). The 5 individuals chosen to put on the participants prayer list may be family members, friends, co-workers, etc. A Daily Prayer List page (Appendix A) is provided in the Appendix for this purpose. During the 40 days the participants are to pray for those on their prayer list every day. It is suggested they also prayerfully use the Activities that Show You Care (Appendix B) list in the Appendix to determine what the Lord wants them to do to reach out to those on their prayer list. Appendix C is a Suggested Greeting to use when they call those on their prayer list to inform them they will be praying for them during the next 40 days. When they call they are to ask them what they want them to pray for in their behalf.

Prayer is the most powerful force on earth. It is essential for one's own personal spiritual growth, and is the most effective means of reaching others for Christ. Concerning prayer and the Christian's spiritual growth Ellen White wrote: "Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Well-spring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor." *Gospel Workers*, p. 254

She also recognized the necessity of prayer in leading others to Christ.

"Through much prayer you must labor for souls, for this is the only method by which you can reach hearts. It is not your work, but the work of Christ who is by your side, that impresses hearts." *Evangelism* p.525

"The Lord will hear our prayers for the conversion of souls." *Messages to Young People*, p.315

As the participants prayerfully consider the suggested ways to reach out to those they are praying for, they will not only be praying for them; they will also be working to bring them closer to Christ and His church. God will bless these efforts when the participants pray for and work for those on their prayer list. He will not only use them to win others to Christ; He will also draw the participants closer to Himself. Ellen White understood this double blessing when she wrote:

"As you work to answer your own prayers, you will find that God will reveal Himself unto you. . . . Begin now to reach higher and still higher. Prize the things of heaven above earthly attractions and inducements. . . . Learn how to pray; learn how to bear a clear and intelligent testimony, and God will be glorified in you." *The Upward Look*, p.256

"Their persevering prayers will bring souls to the cross. In cooperation with their self-sacrificing efforts Jesus will move upon hearts, working miracles in the conversion of souls." *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, p.27

In order to facilitate the prayer emphasis during the 40 days there is a Prayer Activity section at the end of each day's devotional. This section gives a suggested prayer focus for the day, and incorporates Bible verses to include in the participants prayer.

After His resurrection, Jesus told His disciples that they were to wait to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit before they went forth to proclaim the gospel to the world.

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.... But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:4-5, 8.

Even though they had spent the past three and a half years daily with Christ, and had seen and participated in a ministry of miracles they were not ready to witness for Him. They were to wait to receive the “power.” After they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which took place on the day of Pentecost they would be “empowered” as never before to witness for Christ.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:1-4

Because the baptism of the Holy Spirit, also called the infilling of the Spirit, is so vital to our personal spiritual growth and our witness to others, the *40 Days* devotional lessons will be based on this important teaching in God’s Word. The participant will have opportunity to better understand the biblical teaching on the baptism of the Holy Spirit as well as enter more fully into this Spirit filled experience.

By choosing to participate in the 40 days of study and prayer each participant will be entering into an amazing and blessed adventure with the Lord. They will experience a deeper relationship with Christ, and will see the Lord use them to draw others closer to Himself in preparation for His soon return. As they fellowship with their prayer partner, and the others participating in the 40 days they will experience a deeper Christian love and unity with their fellow believers, which will also play an important role in their personal spiritual growth.

In order to get the most from the *40 Days* of study and prayer it is recommended that this be the first thing each participant does in the morning. It may require rising a little earlier, but the effort will be richly rewarded. If they ask the Lord to wake them so they can have some quality time with Him, He will hear and answer their prayer. Concerning Christ’s devotional life Ellen White wrote:

“Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed.” Christ’s Object Lessons, P.140

Christ will do the same for each participant during the 40 days if they ask Him. He very much desires to anoint each of us with His Spirit in preparation for each new day. This *40 Days* devotional study is designed to facilitate just that; a daily anointing of God's Spirit for personal spiritual growth, and witnessing for Christ. Appendix D in the *40 Days* devotional book titled, "After the 40 Days of Prayer and Devotional Studies," gives suggestions on how to keep their spiritual experience growing that each participant has entered into during the past 40 days.

During the 40 days the participants are to invite those they are praying for to attend a special Visitor's Sabbath that will be held at the church at the end of the 40 day period. It is suggested that some type of evangelistic meetings be scheduled soon after the Visitor's Sabbath. During the Visitor's Sabbath all visitors will be invited to attend opening night of those evangelistic meetings.

Also, during the 40 days each participant will be praying for the Visitor's Sabbath and evangelistic meetings. This simple approach will lead many in your church to become personally involved in praying for and inviting those on their prayer list to Visitor's Sabbath and the evangelistic meetings.

Two other suggestions can help to increase the benefit of the 40 days program. First, it can be suggested that the participants choose to fast during the 40 day period. This is not a complete fast, but can include eliminating sweets, cutting out one meal per day, etc. It can also be suggested that they fast from all unnecessary secular activities such as secular TV (religious programs are acceptable), secular music, surfing the internet, computer games, etc. Those who choose to fast in this manner will receive an even greater benefit from the 40 days.

Secondly, it is suggested that meetings be held at the church each night for the first 5 - 7 nights of the 40 day program. This allows the participants to begin fellowshiping together. The meeting can include singing, discussion of the devotional study for that day, and a special prayer time for those on the participant's prayer list and united prayer for God's blessing on the 40 day program.

I think you can see the impact this 40 day emphasis will have on your church members who participate, as well as on the entire church. Every member will be spiritually uplifted as they see many visitors attending Visitor's Sabbath and the evangelistic meetings.

Benefits and Uses of the 40 Day Devotional and Prayer Focus

The goal of the *40 Days* devotional study and prayer book is to benefit God's work and people in several ways. The book has three main emphasis; devotional study and prayer, and outreach.

Benefits

First, all who prayerfully enter into the 40 days of personal devotional study and prayer will strengthen their relationship with the Lord. They will grow in the Spirit filled experience, and their prayer life will become more consistent and effective. Each devotional section is designed to lay a strong spiritual foundation in the lives of the participants.

Secondly, the *40 Days* book has an emphasis on reaching out to and praying for 5 individuals who are non-Adventists or former Adventists living in the participant's area. Prayer for those on the prayer lists will enable the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of those prayed for in bringing them closer to Christ. Members will be encouraged as they see the Spirit answering their prayers.

Uses

The *40 Days* book can be used in conjunction with any evangelistic effort. Fifty days before the meetings begin church members can be invited to participate in the 40 days of devotional study and prayer. The Sabbath the 40 days program begins is called "Kick-Off Sabbath" in this manual. As part of their daily prayer focus they should include the Visitor's Sabbath and evangelistic meetings. The Visitor's Sabbath should be held at the end of the 40 days. The evangelistic outreach meetings should be conducted shortly after the Visitor's Sabbath. The visitors who attend Visitor's Sabbath are given an evangelistic meeting handbill and invited to attend opening night of the evangelistic meetings.

Imagine the power of having many church members systematically praying for Visitor's Sabbath and the evangelistic meetings every day for 40 days. Plus, the 5 individuals placed on their individual prayer lists are to be invited to attend Visitor's Sabbath and opening night of the evangelistic meetings. The church will see many friends, family members, and former Adventists attend in response to their personal invitation supported by the daily prayers for these individuals.

This 40 days of devotional study and prayer focus will prove to be a blessing to any spiritual emphasis in the local church; whether spiritual growth meetings for the members or outreach efforts in the community. The 40 day emphasis can be conducted one or two times a year in your church.

A conference can also use the 40 day emphasis prior to some major conference-wide spiritual emphasis or evangelistic effort. Pastors and conference church members can join together in united study and prayer for the event.

Promotion

Present at Elder's Meeting

- Get their suggestions and support

Present at Church Board

- Explain program
- Approve program and budget
- Choose Kick-Off Sabbath date
- Vote 40 Days Coordinator – recommend prayer coordinator
- No conflicting programs should be scheduled for Kick-Off Sabbath or Visitor's Sabbath/Evangelistic Meeting opening night at the end of the 40 days

Advertise "Kick-Off" Sabbath for 2 Sabbaths prior

- Members who want to participate sign up with Coordinator on those Sabbaths

Kick-Off Sabbath –

Participants register and receive the *40 Days* devotional books

The 40 days program is explained to participants

Most will probably wait until "Kick-Off Sabbath" to sign up

Promote evangelistic meetings

Sermon on importance of personal devotional life and reaching out to others

Give invitation at end of sermon for those who want to participate

- Option 1 - Give call to all who want to participate to come forward before closing hymn
 - General Prayer for 40 Day Program
 - Brief explanation of 40 Day Program
 - Sing Closing Hymn
- Option 2 – Give call to all who want to participate to come forward during closing hymn
 - General Prayer for 40 Day Program
 - Dismiss non-participants

Instruct participants

Give *40 Days* devotional books to participants

- Participants can pay for *40 Days* devotional via tithe envelope

Explain each section of the *40 Days* devotional book

Participants are to use the Appendix A page for their personal prayer list.

Inform of date for Special Participants Meeting

Announce Visitor's Sabbath or Evangelistic Meeting dates scheduled at end of 40 Days

- Participants are to pray for these events during the next 40 days
- Participants are to invite those on their prayer list to these events via phone, email, mail an invitation or in person.

Special Participant's Meeting

This is a meeting for all who chose to participate in the 40 days

Date: Held approximately 20 days after Kick-off Sabbath

Suggestions: local church decide date

- Sabbath Morning breakfast, afternoon lunch
- Friday night service
- Mid-week service

Devotional

Participants give names of those they are praying for to Pastor or Coordinator of the 40 Days program

Testimonies of "What's Happening"

Pray for 40 day program, Visitor's Sabbath, Evangelistic Meetings, and individuals being prayed for on their prayer list page.

Remind the participants to invite those they are praying for to Visitor's Sabbath or Evangelistic Meeting opening night.

Visitor's Sabbath

Participants invite those on prayer list

- Phone call
- Mail invitation card
- Email
- Text Messaging
- In person

Give gift to all visitors

It is suggested a Welcome Card be given to everyone who attends church that Sabbath and have everyone return card before end of service

- Pastor and Coordinator separate church member's names from visitor's names on Welcome Cards - this is necessary to know who the visitors were. A Thank You Card to all visitors who attended, or a We Missed You Card to those invited, but did not attend can be mailed if the church chooses to do so.

Sabbath Worship Service Suggestions

- Option 1 – Special Music Program with devotionals between musical numbers
- Option 2 – Normal Worship Service with Testimonies before Sermon
- Option 3 – Mixed program of Music, Devotional, Testimonies

Invite all visitors to upcoming evangelistic event, which should take place within 1 or 2 weeks

Church Potluck

40 Days Materials

40 Days Prayer & Devotional Books

- Available at ABC's or on our website; www.spiritbaptism.org

Gifts for Visitors on Visitor's Sabbath

- Church Board decide

Summary of 40 Days Program for 50 Participants

50 church members participate in daily devotional study and prayer for 40 days

50 church members strengthen their daily devotional habits

50 church members praying every day for 40 days for 5 interests each, Visitor's Sabbath, and the evangelistic meetings

250 former and non-Adventists being prayed for every day for 40 days

250 former and non-Adventists personally reached out to in community by church members who are participating

250 former and non-Adventists receive personal invitation to attend Visitor's Sabbath

20 or more former or non-Adventists attend church on Visitor's Sabbath

250 former and non-Adventists personally invited to attend opening night of evangelistic meetings

20 or more visitors attend opening night of evangelistic meetings

Goals of 40 Days Program Example

Participants experience personal spiritual revival
Participants strengthen their daily devotional habits
Participants personally reach out to 5 interests in community
Many visitors attend Visitor's Sabbath and opening night of evangelistic meetings
The 40 days program combines personal revival, corporate church revival with evangelistic outreach

Outline of Schedule for 40 Days Program

Present at Elder's Meeting to inform and approve
Present at Church Board Meeting to inform and approve
Purchase Materials (40 Day books needed)
Promote at church for 2 Sabbaths before Kick – Off Sabbath
Kick – Off Sabbath – Approximately 40 days before Visitor's Sabbath and 50 days before Evangelistic Meetings
Special Participants Meeting – Approximately 20 days after Kick-Off Sabbath
Visitor's Sabbath – At end of 40 days
Evangelistic Meetings – at end of 40 Days or 1 to 2 weeks after Visitor's Sabbath maximum

Suggestion for Success: It is recommended that several individuals be responsible for the 40 days program to work with the Program Coordinator.

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