

# TO BE LIKE JESUS

ELLEN G. WHITE

*Daily Devotionals*



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## Jesus, Our Pattern, Depended on Prayer

*Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear. Hebrews 5:7, NKJV.*

EVENING IS DRAWING on as Jesus calls to His side three of His disciples, Peter, James, and John, and leads them across the fields, and far up a rugged path, to a lonely mountainside. . . .

The light of the setting sun still lingers on the mountaintop, and gilds with its fading glory the path they are traveling. But soon the light dies out from hill as well as valley, the sun disappears behind the western horizon, and the solitary travelers are wrapped in the darkness of night. . . .

Presently Christ tells them that they are now to go no farther. Stepping a little aside from them, the Man of Sorrows pours out His supplications with strong crying and tears. He prays for strength to endure the test in behalf of humanity. He must Himself gain a fresh hold on Omnipotence, for only thus can He contemplate the future. And He pours out His heart longings for His disciples, that in the hour of the power of darkness their faith may not fail. . . .

At first the disciples unite their prayers with His in sincere devotion; but after a time they are overcome with weariness, and, even while trying to retain their interest in the scene, they fall asleep. Jesus has told them of His sufferings; He has taken them with Him that they might unite with Him in prayer; even now He is praying for them. The Savior has seen the gloom of His disciples, and has longed to lighten their grief by an assurance that their faith has not been in vain. . . . Now the burden of His prayer is that they may be given a manifestation of the glory He had with the Father before the world was, that His kingdom may be revealed to human eyes, and that His disciples may be strengthened to behold it. He pleads that they may witness a manifestation of His divinity that will comfort them in the hour of His supreme agony with the knowledge that He is of a surety the Son of God and that His shameful death is a part of the plan of redemption.

His prayer is heard. While He is bowed in lowliness upon the stony ground, suddenly the heavens open, the golden gates of the City of God are thrown wide, and holy radiance descends upon the mount, enshrouding the Savior's form. Divinity from within flashes through humanity, and meets the glory coming from above. Arising from His prostrate position, Christ stands in godlike majesty. The soul agony is gone. His countenance now shines "as the sun," and His garments are "white as the light."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 419-421.

## Christ's Example Gives Power to Resist Temptation

*It came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." Luke 3:21, 22, NKJV.*

CHRIST'S PROFESSED FOLLOWERS may be strong in the Lord if they avail themselves of the provisions made for them through the merits of Jesus. God has not closed the heavens against the humble prayers of repenting, humble, believing souls. The humble, simple, earnest, persevering prayer of the faithful one will now penetrate heaven, as surely as did the prayer of Christ [when He was baptized]. Heaven opened to His prayer, and this shows us that we may be reconciled to God, and that communion is established between God and us through the righteousness of our Lord and Savior. Christ took upon Him humanity, and yet He was in close, intimate relationship with God. He linked humanity with His divine nature, making it possible for us also to become partakers of the divine nature, and thus escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Christ is our example in all things. In response to His prayer to His Father, heaven was opened, and the Spirit descended like a dove and abode upon Him. The Holy Spirit of God is to communicate with men and women and to abide in the hearts of the obedient and faithful. Light and strength will come to those who earnestly seek it in order that they may have wisdom to resist Satan, and to overcome in times of temptation. We are to overcome even as Christ overcame.

Jesus opened His public mission with fervent prayer, and His example makes manifest the fact that prayer is necessary in order to lead a successful Christian life. He was constantly in communion with His Father, and His life presents to us a perfect pattern which we are to imitate. . . .

We are dependent upon God for success in living the Christian life, and Christ's example opens before us the path by which we may come to a never-failing source of strength, from which we may draw grace and power to resist the enemy and to come off victorious.—*Signs of the Times*, July 24, 1893.

## Approaching God With Reverence

*He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come." Luke 11:2, NKJV.*

TO HALLOW THE NAME of the Lord requires that the words in which we speak of the Supreme Being be uttered with reverence. "Holy and reverend is his name" (Ps. 111:9). We are never in any manner to treat lightly the titles or appellations of the Deity. In prayer we enter the audience chamber of the Most High; and we should come before Him with holy awe. The angels veil their faces in His presence. The cherubim and the bright and holy seraphim approach His throne with solemn reverence. How much more should we, finite, sinful beings, come in a reverent manner before the Lord, our Maker!

But to hallow the name of the Lord means much more than this. We may, like the Jews in Christ's day, manifest the greatest outward reverence for God, and yet profane His name continually. "The name of the Lord" is "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Ex. 34:5-7). Of the church of Christ it is written, "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. 33:16). This name is put upon every follower of Christ. It is the heritage of the child of God. The family are called after the Father. The prophet Jeremiah, in the time of Israel's sore distress and tribulation, prayed, "We are called by thy name; leave us not" (Jer. 14:9).

This name is hallowed by the angels of heaven, by the inhabitants of unfallen worlds. When you pray, "Hallowed be thy name," you ask that it may be hallowed in this world, hallowed in you. God has acknowledged you before men and angels as His child; pray that you may do no dishonor to the "worthy name by the which ye are called" (James 2:7). God sends you into the world as His representative. In every act of life you are to make manifest the name of God. This petition calls upon you to possess His character. You cannot hallow His name, you cannot represent Him to the world, unless in life and character you represent the very life and character of God. This you can do only through the acceptance of the grace and righteousness of Christ.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 106, 107.

## Pray for Daily Bread

*Give us this day our daily bread. Matthew 6:11, NKJV.*

LIKE [A] CHILD, you shall receive day by day what is required for the day's need. Every day you are to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Be not dismayed if you have not sufficient for tomorrow. You have the assurance of His promise, "So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." David says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps. 37:3, 25). . . .

He who lightened the cares and anxieties of His widowed mother and helped her to provide for the household at Nazareth sympathizes with every mother in her struggle to provide her children food. He who had compassion on the multitude because they "fainted, and were scattered abroad" (Matt. 9:36) still has compassion on the suffering poor. His hand is stretched out toward them in blessing; and in the very prayer which He gave His disciples, He teaches us to remember the poor. . . .

The prayer for daily bread includes not only food to sustain the body, but that spiritual bread which will nourish the soul unto life everlasting. Jesus bids us, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:27). He says, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever" (verse 51). Our Savior is the Bread of Life, and it is by beholding His love, by receiving it into the soul, that we feed upon the bread which came down from heaven.

We receive Christ through His Word, and the Holy Spirit is given to open the Word of God to our understanding and bring home its truths to our hearts. We are to pray day by day that as we read His Word, God will send His Spirit to reveal to us the truth that will strengthen our souls for the day's need.

In teaching us to ask every day for what we need—both temporal and spiritual blessings—God has a purpose to accomplish for our good. He would have us realize our dependence upon His constant care, for He is seeking to draw us into communion with Himself. In this communion with Christ, through prayer and the study of the great and precious truths of His Word, we shall as hungry souls be fed; as those that thirst, we shall be refreshed at the fountain of life.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 111-113.

## Have a Forgiving Spirit

*If you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14, 15, NRSV.*

OUR SAVIOR TAUGHT His disciples to pray: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” A great blessing is here asked upon conditions. We ourselves state these conditions. We ask that the mercy of God toward us may be measured by the mercy which we extend to others. Christ declares that this is the rule by which the Lord will deal with us. “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Wonderful terms! but how little are they understood or heeded.

One of the most common sins, and one that is attended with most pernicious results, is the indulgence of an unforgiving spirit. How many will cherish animosity or revenge and then bow before God and ask to be forgiven as they forgive. Surely they can have no true sense of the import of this prayer or they would not dare to take it upon their lips. We are dependent upon the pardoning mercy of God every day and every hour; how then can we cherish bitterness and malice toward our fellow sinners! If, in all their daily relations, Christians would carry out the principles of this prayer, what a blessed change would be wrought in the church and in the world! This would be the most convincing testimony that could be given to the reality of Bible religion. . . .

We are admonished by the apostle: “Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.” Paul would have us distinguish between the pure, unselfish love which is prompted by the spirit of Christ, and the unmeaning, deceitful pretense with which the world abounds. This base counterfeit has misled many souls. It would blot out the distinction between right and wrong, by agreeing with the transgressors instead of faithfully showing them their errors. Such a course never springs from real friendship. The spirit by which it is prompted dwells only in the carnal heart.

While Christians will be ever kind, compassionate, and forgiving, they can feel no harmony with sin. They will abhor evil and cling to that which is good, at the sacrifice of association or friendship with the ungodly. The spirit of Christ will lead us to hate sin, while we are willing to make any sacrifice to save the sinner.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 170, 171.