VOTED. To approve the creation and implementation of the Back to the Altar initiative to encourage the daily, habitual practice of morning and evening worship in the lives of Seventh-day Adventist individuals and families for personal revival, reformation, and outreach. Back to the Altar seeks to safeguard the spiritual lives of members and others from the negative effects of digital media by promoting good digital hygiene and sharing healthy ways to use media for fellowship and evangelism.

BACK TO THE ALTAR: AN INSIDE-OUT REVOLUTION
A DAILY PLACE FOR GOD IN EVERY HEART AND HOME
2022-2027
A GLOBAL INITIATIVE OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

BIBLICAL GUIDANCE

“One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight” (Exod 29:39).

“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)

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name” (Heb 13:15).

“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.’” (Rev 14:6-7)

OVERVIEW

In the powerful biblical narrative of Elijah’s triumph on Mt. Carmel, a wonderful, hidden gem is often overlooked in our rush to see the fire fall and the sacrifice consumed. First Kings 18:36 says that it was “at the time of the evening sacrifice” that Elijah prayed for the fire to fall from heaven, that God might demonstrate He was Israel’s God—the only true and living God. It is a telling fact that Elijah waited until the time of the evening sacrifice—allowing the prophets of Baal to wail all day while mutilating themselves—to rebuild Israel’s broken altar and seek God’s favor again.
This was no coincidence. Morning and evening worship experiences were to be the spiritual bookends of Israelite life. It was God who had instituted this twice daily worship experience to develop a devotional cadence in the lives of His people, as Exodus 29:39 makes clear: “One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight.”

In a very real sense, Elijah was not just calling the nation—individuals and families—back to the altar of true worship; He was calling the nation back to the altar of regular, daily, systematic worship of the true God! Israel’s corporate worship altar was broken, but Israel’s personal and family altars were broken long before.

We Have a Problem

It is the conviction of the Back to the Altar (BTTA) committee that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is facing a similar crisis in the area of personal and family worship. Too many of our altars are neglected, broken, or non-existent. A 2018 worldwide survey of Seventh-day Adventists found that only 34 percent of Adventist homes are engaging in regular morning and evening worship, and only 52 percent of church members have any personal devotions at all.¹ Can a church with an end-time message centered in worship—the Three Angels’ Messages of Revelation 14:6-12—deliver such a solemn message if its members are not faithfully engaged in personal and family worship? In other words, can we proclaim effectively what many do not practice daily?

On the critical importance of devotional time spent with God, Ellen G White wrote the following: “There is nothing more needed in the work of God than the practical results of communion with God.”² She writes in another place that “no words can properly set forth the blessedness of genuine worship.”³ Authentic worship experiences should neither be fragmentary nor intermittent, especially in the Adventist family: “Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to the Lord wherever they pitch their tent. . . . Fathers and mothers should often lift up their hearts to God in humble supplication for themselves and their children. Let the father, as priest of the household, lay upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household Jesus will love to tarry.”⁴

Our Most Urgent Need

The restoration of personal and family worship among Seventh-day Adventists is the most pressing need of our time but doing so will require much prayer and effort. Today we face the challenge of technologies that, while providing some efficiencies, benefits, and conveniences, increasingly occupy our time while altering our minds. Widespread addiction to

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devices and media, especially social media, has left too many of us anxious, irritable, lonely, stressed, depressed, sleepless, and unhappy with our station in life.

Ironically, personal and family worship has the opposite effect. It calms our minds, decreases loneliness, reduces stress, increases peace, fulfills our emotional needs, and teaches us contentment. The Back to the Altar initiative seeks to educate members and others about the negative effects of tech/media addiction and its impact on the spiritual life and well-being. The goal is also to share best practices for safeguarding mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual health in order to empower our walk with God and fuel or evangelistic efforts for Him.

Now more than ever, God is calling Seventh-day Adventist individuals and families back to His heart—back to consistent times of refreshing in His presence. It is for this reason that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is launching the Back to the Altar initiative, a movement to encourage daily personal worship in the life of every Seventh-day Adventist for revival, reformation, and outreach. By 2027, we hope to see at least 70 percent of Adventist members engaged in daily morning and evening worship. If we rebuild our broken altars, we will fully reflect God’s image and be empowered to finish His work in preparation for the soon return of Jesus.

RATIONALE

During the previous quinquennium, we have witnessed the immense blessing to the Seventh-day Adventist Church of such initiatives as Total Member Involvement (TMI), The Great Controversy global distribution project, the revitalized Three Angels’ Messages proclamation, and the current I WILL GO Strategic Plan. All of these wonderful programs would be much more effective if the devotional lives of members were faithful and consistent. We cannot take for granted that members are growing spiritually through personal and family worship experiences, and many departments of our Church have been working tirelessly on this issue. We thank God for them. We also wish to express sincere gratitude to General Conference Family Ministries for robust and ongoing efforts to encourage individual and family worship among Seventh-day Adventist members. We believe this issue to be of such critical importance that it must become a priority for all entities of the Church through a sustained, coordinated emphasis.

The BTTA initiative seeks to support and fulfill the following fundamental affirmation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for spiritual growth noted in the I WILL GO Strategic Plan:
Fundamental Belief 11: Growing in Christ

By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church (emphasis added). We are also called to follow Christ’s example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of humanity. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience. (1 Chr 29:11; Ps. 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Matt 20:25-28; 25:31-46; Luke 10:17-20; John 20:21; Rom 8:38, 39; 2 Cor 3:17, 18; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph 5:19, 20; 6:12-18; Phil 3:7-14; Col 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; 1 Thess 5:16-18, 23; Heb 10:25; James 1:27; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 1 John 4:4.)

I WILL GO Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Spiritual Growth

KPI 5.1

Significant increase in the number of church members regularly praying, studying the Bible, reading the writings of Ellen G White, and engaging in other personal devotions.

Responsible for Implementation: Adult Bible Study Guides; Archives, Statistics, and Research; Ellen G White Estate; Family Ministries; Ministerial Association; and Sabbath School and Personal Ministries.

KPI 6.4

Significant increase in the number of church members regularly engaging in family worships.

Responsible for Implementation: Family Ministries; Women’s Ministries; Youth Ministries; and Children’s Ministries.
KPI 7.3

Increased *ethical and responsible use of media platforms* by students and all other individuals.

Responsible for Implementation: Children’s Ministries; Communication; Education; Family Ministries; and Youth Ministries.

BACK TO THE ALTAR INITIATIVE GOALS

1. Seventh-day Adventist Members—Individuals and Families

   a. **Initiative Goal:** 70 percent of Adventist individuals and families engaging in morning and evening worship daily by 2027. This is the prayer goal for the initiative. BTTA efforts will primarily target Adventist singles and families of all types (i.e. nuclear families, blended families, foster families, single-parent led families, grandparent-led families, etc). The initiative will also seek to reach people everywhere, calling them to a daily devotional walk with God and careful stewardship of their mind, “the capital of the body.” We believe this foundational spiritual orientation is critical for personal transformation and evangelism.

   b. **Educate church members and others on the effects of media and technology on the human brain and share best practices for protecting the mind and safeguarding the spiritual life.** Studies show that today’s media-saturated society is having a devastating effect on the human brain. Not only does media occupy much of our time, but uninformed usage is degrading our capacity to know, experience, and worship God. As Ellen White presciently stated many years ago, “It is the mind that worships God and allies us to heavenly beings.” It is absolutely essential that the Seventh-day Adventist Church make a concerted effort to educate members and others on this critical issue, and this will be a central focus of the BTTA initiative.

2. Church Leaders (leaders at all levels of the Church and affiliated para-church entities):

   a. **Encourage leaders serving in all areas and entities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to engage in personal and family devotions each morning and evening.** We must care about the spiritual lives of God’s leaders and that of their families and loved ones. We believe it is nonnegotiable that Church leaders show by example that they are committed to building and maintaining their personal and family altars.

   b. **Encourage Church leaders to share openly about their personal devotional walk with God—where they are in their altar experience with God and how God is leading, developing, and transforming them.** We believe such sharing will have a galvanizing impact on members and others. The BTTA initiative will seek to create opportunities for this...
kind of sharing so that leaders are seen as people in relationship with God and not simply persons doing ministry for God.

3. Back to the Altar for the World

a. Present what the Seventh-day Adventist Church is doing through the BTТА initiative to religious and secular media around the world to invite others to join the movement. The Revival and Reformation Committee has requested that the BTТА initiative look for opportunities to share what it develops with the world at large. We want people everywhere to benefit from this initiative and be drawn closer to Jesus Christ through a consistent, vibrant devotional experience.

b. Share BTТА resources and content through social media to encourage daily worship and healthy uses of all forms of media and technology. It will be important that a specific suite of resources be developed specifically for those we hope to reach through social media with this essential message.

4. Music

a. Share the role of music and praise in personal worship. One of the important goals of BTТА is to encourage musical praise and expression in personal devotions and family worship.

b. Highlight the importance of gratitude in worship, expressed through music and other means of worship. Thankfulness is essential to worship. The heart that worships God acknowledges His love and goodness in good times and in trial. BTТА wishes to encourage this spirit of gratitude through music and more in personal and family worship.

5. Resource Creation (All resources will be Adventist Possibility Ministries-compatible). These are some of the resources that BTТА hopes to create and promote to encourage the practice of regular, daily devotions with God.

a. Adventist Home, Child Guidance Video Series: The objective of this resource project is to capture principles from these excellent volumes and show how they may be applied in today’s 21st Century family. Special emphasis will be given to Ellen White’s counsel regarding the home circle and worship altar.

b. Individual/Family Worship Spots: These multi-media spots will be designed to give individuals and families worship ideas to develop and strengthen devotional life in the home. These spots will show the many ways in which worship can be simple and meaningful, participatory, and enjoyable. We hope that these worship “teasers” will capture the rich diversity of personal worship experiences for individuals and families. These ideas will be captured in a Worship Ideas Database, an online clearinghouse of devotional tips for individuals.
and families. Many entities of the Church have developed resources for this purpose. We hope to aggregate them in an easily searchable database for online visitors and seekers.

c. **Global Family Worship Night:** Each year General Conference Family Ministries conducts the Family Togetherness Week of Prayer. We hope to partner with Family Ministries to hold a global family worship experience on one night during this life-changing week. We wish to invite all Adventist individuals and families to the altar on that night. The Olivers, our current Family Ministries directors, have expressed support for this idea, and we thank them for their ongoing support of the BTTA initiative.

d. **Back to the Altar Book:** This resource will set forth the call to rebuild our altars and outline the steps by which an individual or family can go about doing so.

e. **Back to the Altar Weekly Podcast:** This weekly podcast will feature stories of people of all backgrounds and ethnicities living in devotion with God. The objective of this resource is to share stories of people’s personal walk with God to encourage the devotional life of others. Additionally, true revival and reformation always seeks ministry opportunities to share how God is working in one’s life. The weekly podcast will show how personal worship can become the fuel for evangelism in new and dynamic ways.

f. **Together Family Worship Curriculum:** This resource aims to give families a tool that will help them worship together for the period of a year. The content will be developed so that families with toddlers, teens, young adults, or a mix of all, can travel through Scripture together and grow closer as a family. Specific content will be developed for each age-group so that learning is age-appropriate for shared discussion and spiritual discovery.

g. **“Worship Now” App for Individuals:** We want to explore a collaboration with the forthcoming young adult devotional app from the Ellen G White Estate to see how we might use this resource to encourage personal daily worship. The White Estate App has received excellent reviews from youth and young adults who have had occasion to see it.

h. **Individual/Family “Digital Hygiene” Media Guide:** This resource will share best practices for the use of smart devices, social media, and personal technology in general. The objective is to help families protect their hearts and minds so that they can remain healthy, open channels with whom the Holy Spirit can dwell and empower.

i. **Back to the Altar—Family Revival Conference:** We can educate and provide resources indefinitely, but there’s nothing that can replace an actual personal and corporate experience in the Word and in prayer. Thus, the goal of Back to the Altar—Family Revival Conference is to put actual feet on the messages that we have been sharing through all our resource channels. We will launch a 3-4 day Revival Conference for leaders, laity, and their families to experience personal revival through increased emphasis on private and corporate prayer; vibrant time in the Word with practical study and application; engaging family worship
activities; and a revitalized focus on the “I Will Go” mission and witness. This conference would be created so that it can be used as a model/template that can be duplicated worldwide.

j. **Back to the Altar—Leadership Training:** We would provide sermons, tools, Power Points, and training materials for leaders to implement BTAA across their divisions, unions, conferences, churches, and territories.

Note: These are some of the core resources that we believe will be needed for the BTAA initiative to be effective. Other resources will no doubt be needed as the initiative develops and unfolds.

**BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR BACK TO THE ALTAR**

**A God who Seeks Relationship with Us:**

“And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’” (Gen 3:8-9)

**Living in Relationship With Me Is Worship:**

“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. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” (Deut 6:4-9)

**Make a Place for Me:**

“And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Exod 25:8).

**Meet Me in Morning and Evening:**

“One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight.” (Exod 29:39)

**Praise Me Every Morning and Evening:**

The Levites were to “to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at evening.” (1 Chr 23:30)
Follow the Example of My Son:

“Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.” (Mark 1:35)

“However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.” (Luke 5:15-16)

Jesus Worshipped First—Being Precedes Doing:

“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles.” (Luke 6:12-13)

God is Looking for Worshippers:

“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)

The Indispensable Gift Given in Worship:

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

Worship Continually:

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” (Heb 13:15)

Preach the Gospel “and Worship Him”:

“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.” (Rev 14:6-7)

A Renewed Mind is Essential:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Rom 12:1-2)
Let it Be:

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:5).

Guard the Heart and Mind:

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Prov 4:23).

No Evil Thing:

“I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.” (Ps 103:3)

Further Biblical Support:

1 Chr 29:11; Ps 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Matt 20:25-28; 25:31-46; Luke 10:17-20; John 20:21; Rom 8:38, 39; 2 Cor 3:17, 18; Gal 5:22-25; Eph 5:19, 20; 6:12-18; Phil 3:7-14; Col 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; 1 Thess 5:16-18, 23; Heb 10:25; James 1:27; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 1 John 4:4.

Live at the Altar:

“Give yourselves to prayer. Live at the altar. Strengthen your purposes by the promises of God.”—1T 169

The Importance of the Devotional Life

“God should be the highest object of our thoughts. Meditating upon him, and pleading with him, elevates the soul and quickens the affections. A neglect of meditation and prayer will surely result in a declension in religious interests. Then will be seen carelessness and slothfulness. Religion is not merely an emotion, a feeling. It is a principle that is interwoven with all the daily duties and transactions of life. Nothing will be entertained, no business engaged in, that will prevent the accompaniment of this principle. To retain pure and undefiled religion it is necessary to be workers, persevering in effort. We must do something ourselves. No one else can do our work. None but ourselves can work out our salvation with fear and trembling. This is the very work which the Lord has left for us to do....

“Decided perseverance in a course of righteousness, disciplining the mind by religious exercises to love, devotion, and heavenly things, will bring the greatest amount of happiness.
If we make God our trust, we have it in our power to control the mind in these things. Through continued exercise, it will become strong to battle with internal foes, and to subdue self, until there is a complete transformation, and the passions, appetites, and will are brought into perfect subjection. Then there will be daily piety at home and abroad, and when we engage in labor for souls, a power will attend our efforts. The humble Christian will have seasons of devotion which are not spasmodic, fitful, or superstitious, but calm and tranquil, deep, constant, and earnest. The love of God, the practice of holiness, will be pleasant when there is a perfect surrender to God....”—GW 106

"The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in his earthly ministry, prayed much to his Father. He was frequently bowed all night in prayer. His spirit was often sorrowful as he felt the powers of the darkness of this world, and he left the busy city and the noisy throng, to seek a retired place to make his intercessions. The Mount of Olives was the favorite resort of the Son of God for his devotions. Frequently after the multitude had left him for the retirement of the night, he rested not, though weary with the labors of the day. In the Gospel of John we read, ‘And every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.’ [John 7:53; 8:1.] While the city was hushed in silence, and the disciples had returned to their homes to obtain refreshment in sleep, Jesus slept not. His divine pleadings were ascending to his Father from the Mount of Olives that his disciples might be kept from the evil influences which they would daily encounter in the world, and that his own soul might be strengthened and braced for the duties and trials of the coming day. All night, while his followers were sleeping, was their divine Teacher praying. The dew and frost of night fell upon his head bowed in prayer. His example is left for his followers.”—GW 106

"Communion with God will ennoble the character and the life. Men will take knowledge of us, as of the first disciples, that we have been with Jesus. This will impart to the worker a power that nothing else can give. Of this power he must not allow himself to be deprived. We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work.”—MH 512

"It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord . . . He desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love, that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things.”—SC 103

"Vital Connection to God Our Only Defense

Contd
Revised 10-11-22tkb
“The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end.”—DA 324

In the School of the Holy Spirit

“There is not an impulse of our nature, not a faculty of the mind or an inclination of the heart, but needs to be, moment by moment, under the control of the Spirit of God.”—PP 421

“The Spirit illumines our darkness, informs our ignorance, and helps us in our manifold necessities. But the mind must be constantly going out after God. If worldliness is allowed to come in, if we have no desire to pray, no desire to commune with Him who is the source of strength and wisdom, the Spirit will not abide with us.”—OHC 154

Prayer and Effort, Effort and Prayer:

“Prayer and effort, effort and prayer, will be the business of your life. You must pray as though the efficiency and praise were all due to God, and labour as though duty were all your own.”—4T 538

Not Safe Without Prayer

“No man is safe for a day or an hour without prayer” (GC 530), but “He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray.”—SC 101

Nothing More Needed

“There is nothing more needed in the work than the practical results of communion with God.”—6T 47

Deep Blessedness of Worship

“The evil of formal worship cannot be too strongly depicted, but no words can properly set forth the deep blessedness of genuine worship.”—9T 143

God Notices Families that Worship:
“The Lord has a special interest in the families of His children here below. Angels offer
the smoke of the fragrant incense for the praying saints. Then in every family let prayer ascend to
heaven both at morning and at the cool sunset hour, in our behalf presenting before God the
Saviour’s merits. Morning and evening the heavenly universe takes notice of every praying
household.”—Ms 19, 1900

*Parents Lead in Worship:*

“Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to the
Lord wherever they pitch their tent.... Fathers and mothers should often lift up their hearts to God
in humble supplication for themselves and their children. Let the father, as priest of the
household, lay upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and
children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household Jesus will love to tarry.”—CG 518

*Danger of the Neglected Family Altar:*

“If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now.
Infidelity and skepticism prevail. Iniquity abounds. Corruption flows in the vital currents of the
soul, and rebellion against God breaks out in the life. Enslaved by sin, the moral powers are
under the tyranny of Satan. The soul is made the sport of his temptations; and unless some
mighty arm is stretched out to rescue him, man goes where the archrebel leads the way”—CG
517

*Let Not Circumstances Interrupt:*

“Family worship should not be governed by circumstances. You are not to pray
occasionally, and when you have a large day’s work, neglect it. In thus doing you lead your
children to look upon prayer as of no special consequence. Prayer means very much to the
children of God, and thank offerings should come up before God morning and evening. Says the
Psalmist, ‘O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our
salvation.’”—Ms 12, 1898

*No Empty Formal Worship:*

“Formal Prayer Is Not Acceptable—In many cases the morning and evening worship is
little more than a mere form, a dull, monotonous repetition of set phrases in which the spirit of
gratitude or the sense of need finds no expression. The Lord accepts not such service. But the
petitions of a humble heart and contrite spirit He will not despise. The opening of our hearts to
our heavenly Father, the acknowledgment of our entire dependence, the expression of our wants,
the homage of grateful love—this is true prayer.”—CG 518

*Worship Should be an Engaging Experience:*

Contd
Revised 10-11-22tkb
“The father, who is the priest of his household, should conduct the morning and evening worship. There is no reason why this should not be the most interesting and enjoyable exercise of the home life, and God is dishonored when it is made dry and irksome. Let the seasons of family worship be short and spirited. Do not let your children or any member of your family dread them because of their tediousness or lack of interest. When a long chapter is read and explained and a long prayer offered, this precious service becomes wearisome, and it is a relief when it is over.”—CG 521

**Citadel of the Mind:**

“Every organ of the body was made to be servant to the mind. The mind is the capital of the body.”—1MCP 72

“The mind controls the whole man. All our actions, good or bad, have their source in the mind. It is the mind that worships God and allies us to heavenly beings. Yet many spend all their lives without becoming intelligent in regard to the casket [jewel case] that contains this treasure.”—1MCP 72

**The Mind—God’s Garden:**

“The mind is the Lord’s garden, and man must cultivate it earnestly in order to form a character after the divine similitude.”—2MCP 800

**Giving Account for Time:**

“Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time.”—COL 342

**Daily Preparation for Trials to Come:**

“The servants of Christ are to prepare no set speech to present when brought to trial for their faith. Their preparation is to be made day by day, in treasuring up in their hearts the precious truths of God’s Word, in feeding upon the teaching of Christ, and through prayer strengthening their faith; then, when brought into trial, the Holy Spirit will bring to their remembrance the very truths that will reach the hearts of those who shall come to hear. God will flash the knowledge obtained by diligent searching of the Scriptures into their memory at the very time when it is needed.”—CSW 40, 41

**Perfect Conformity to the Will of God**
“But if we find no pleasure now in the contemplation of heavenly things; if we have no interest in seeking the knowledge of God, no delight in beholding the character of Christ; if holiness has no attractions for us—then we may be sure that our hope of heaven is vain. Perfect conformity to the will of God is the high aim to be constantly before the Christian. He will love to talk of God, of Jesus, of the home of bliss and purity which Christ has prepared for them that love Him. The contemplation of these themes, when the soul feasts upon the blessed assurances of God, the apostle represents as tasting ‘the powers of the world to come.’”—5T 745

“If you are right with God today, you are ready if Christ should come today.”—HP 227

*Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version of the Bible.