My Prayer for the New Year

Franz Joseph I, the emperor of Austria and king of Hungary and Bohemia from 1848 to 1916, ruled for 68 years, the third-longest reign in the recorded history of Europe. Though his life was not exemplary in every aspect, he did have one commendable practice. Each morning he arrived in his study at 5 o’clock to pray at the altar next to his desk. The altar remains today in his palace in Austria as a testament to the value of prayer.

During this same time period, Seventh-day Adventist Church co-founder Ellen G. White also lived, prayed and wrote much about the value of prayer. My favorite written work on connecting with God comes from White’s book, Steps to Christ, chapter 11, which is titled “The Privilege of Prayer.” It articulates four elements of meaningful communication with God that, when applied, facilitate a vibrant...
1. **Recognize our great need for Christ.** When we realize that, as the apostle Paul states in Ephesians 6, we wrestle not with humanity but with great spiritual forces beyond our strength, it becomes clear that we need a power greater than ourselves to prevail in our Christian walk.

2. **Sin separates.** The psalmist David says, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Ps. 66:18). It is not so much that God turns a deaf ear to us as much as our sin prevents our hearts from hearing Him.

3. **Forgiveness opens the floodgates of blessing.** Experiencing God’s mercy and grace becomes a blessing He wants us to bestow upon those who have wronged or wounded us, thereby “paying it forward.”

4. **Faith is the key to unlock His promises.** When we pray, we must believe He will answer in a way that is best for us. Psalm 84:11 promises, “No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly” (ESV).

My prayer for 2014 is that we will make prayer our daily priority. In doing so, we will experience the immeasurable joy of God’s presence, the first step in experiencing the mission.

*Dave Weigley (dweigley@columbiaunion.net) is president of the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

**READ MORE**

---

**Taashi Rowe, Visitor News Bulletin Editor**

5427 Twin Knolls Road, Columbia, MD 21045

Email: visitor@columbiaunion.net • Website: www.columbiaunion.org

Facebook: facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor • Twitter: @VisitorNews

Visitor News Bulletin is an electronic newsletter published by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Columbia Union Conference. You are free to reprint any portion of the bulletin, however, please identify Visitor News Bulletin as the source.

---

This email was sent to ahc@andrews.edu. To ensure that you continue receiving our emails, please add us to your address book or safe list.

manage your preferences | opt out using TrueRemove®.

Got this as a forward? Sign up to receive our future emails.
Franz Joseph I, the emperor of Austria and king of Hungary and Bohemia from 1848 to 1916, ruled for 68 years, the third-longest reign in the recorded history of Europe. Though his life was not exemplary in every aspect, he did have one commendable practice. Each morning he arrived in his study at 5 o’clock to pray at the altar next to his desk. The altar remains today in his palace in Austria as a testament to the value of prayer. During this same time period, Seventh-day Adventist Church co-founder Ellen G. White also lived, prayed and wrote much about the value of prayer. My favorite written work on connecting with God comes from White’s book, *Steps to Christ*, chapter 11, which is titled “The Privilege of Prayer.” It articulates four elements of meaningful communication with God that, when applied, facilitate a vibrant relationship:

1. **Recognize our great need for Christ.** When we realize that, as the apostle Paul states in Ephesians 6, we wrestle not with humanity but with great spiritual forces beyond our strength, it becomes clear that we need a power greater than ourselves to prevail in our Christian walk.

2. **Sin separates.** The psalmist David says, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Ps. 66:18). It is not so much that God turns a deaf ear to us as much as our sin prevents our hearts from hearing Him.

3. **Forgiveness opens the floodgates of blessing.** Experiencing God’s mercy and grace becomes a blessing He wants us to bestow upon those who have wronged or wounded us, thereby “paying it forward.”

4. **Faith is the key to unlock His promises.** When we pray, we must believe He will answer in a way that is best for us. Psalm 84:11 promises, “No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly” (ESV).
Your Wants, Joys, Sorrows, Cares, Fears

I will never forget when, some years ago, a colleague of mine shared by memory her favorite passage from *Steps to Christ*:

“Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. ‘The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy’ (James 5:11). His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. ‘He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds’ (Ps. 147:3). The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son” (p.100).

My prayer for 2014 is that we will make prayer our daily priority. In doing so, we will experience the immeasurable joy of God’s presence, the first step in experiencing the mission.

**COMMENTS POLICY:** The Columbia Union Conference *Visitor* encourages quality conversation and welcomes your thoughtful comments. All comments are subject to approval but will not be edited. Please limit your comments to 500 words or less. Only one comment per person will be published.