

# Back to the Altar





## What is “Back to the Altar”?

- **A spiritual revival initiative**
- **Focus on daily personal and family worship**
- **A call to intentional time with God**

# The Biblical Foundation

- Altars = worship, surrender, encounter
- Abraham (Genesis 12:7–8) 7 The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him. 8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.
- “Wherever Abraham pitched his tent, close beside it was set up his altar.” (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 128)



# Why “Back to the Altar”?

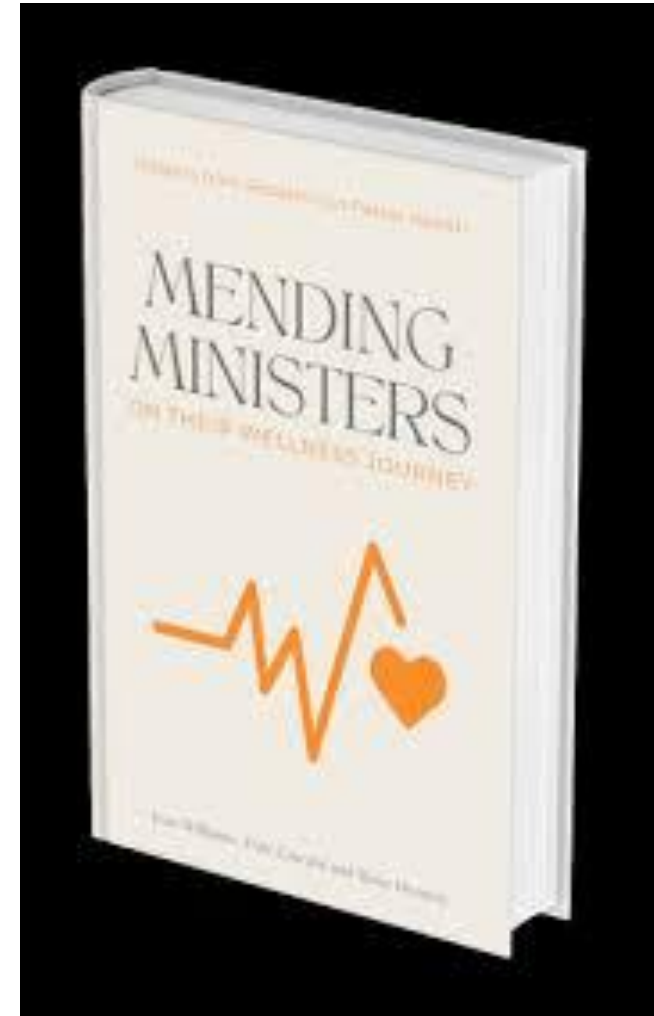
- **Only 37% of Seventh-day Adventist church members across the globe engage in morning and evening devotions with their families.**
- **Further, only 52 percent of Adventists engage in daily personal devotions of any kind.**



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Mending Ministers on their wellness journey!  
*(Research on Pastor Health)*

- Two thirds (67%) of pastors struggle to make time for personal devotions
- Over half (56%) of pastors have difficulty with personal prayer
- Over half (54%) of pastors have trouble maintaining connection with God
- Two in five (40%) pastors struggle with keeping the Sabbath day holy.



# Daily Personal Devotions (Overall)

About **51–52%** of Adventists engage in daily personal devotions

Around **22%** do it a few times a week

About **14%** rarely or never have personal devotions



**Simple summary:**

Only **about half of members** have consistent daily devotion.

# Daily Bible Reading

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- Around **48–51%** read the **Bible daily**
- About **28%** read it a few times a week
- Roughly **10%** read very rarely or never

👉 **Insight:**

Many read the Bible—but **daily consistency is still a challenge.**



# Personal Prayer (Strongest Area)

- About **65%–87%** pray daily
- Around **10%** pray rarely or never

👉 **Insight:**

Prayer is the **strongest spiritual habit**, but still not universal.



# Spirit of Prophecy Reading

- About **53%** read **Ellen G. White** writings weekly
- About **11%** never read them

## **Insight:**

Regular engagement is moderate—but not widespread daily.

# Why “Back to the Altar”?

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- **“Satan employs every possible device to prevent [people] from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions.”--Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 593.**
- **Satan knows that God’s powerful Word makes him powerless. Satan knows that prayer and Bible study are the most powerful weapons humanity can use against him (Eph. 6:17-18; Heb. 4:12), so he does everything he can to stop us from reading and praying.**
- **He knows that God’s words are powerful and that they not only spoke this world into existence (Ps. 33:6), but they can raise the dead (John 11:41-44) and give us strength to overcome (Matt. 4:1-11).**
- **“Satan well knows that all whom he can lead to neglect prayer... will be overcome.” (Great Controversy, p. 519)**



# Time Spent on our Phone

- It has affected our culture





# Benefits for Individuals

- Connectivity
- Community
- Education
- Information
- News
- Easy Information Sharing
- Support Noble Causes
- Stress Reliever and Way to Decrease Loneliness



# Benefits for Families

- Inexpensive connectivity with family from anywhere at any time.
- Stay connected via statuses, share photos and videos.
- Can share your problems and feelings in hard times with a geographically separated family member.
- Provide an instant source of connection with the family to students and workers abroad.
- Efficient source of establishing a friendly atmosphere for family relationships via group chats and events sharing.

# Average Screen Time: Is it time well spend?

- Globally, the average screen time is **6 hours 58 minutes**/day.
- Experts recommend less than **2 hours** of screen time/day.





# Negatives for Individuals

- SHORTENED ATTENTION SPAN
- MEMORY LOSS
- FRACTURED THINKING
- LOSS OF EMPATHY
- META-AWARENESS
- NEGATIVE ATTITUDE
- DECLINE OF HEALTH

# Negatives for Families

- **Changed Family Culture** - less family gatherings
- **Increased Isolation** of family members
- **Changed Marital Relationships** - present but emotionally absent
- **Decrease in Family Importance** - decreases dependence on parents, and bond with parents
- **Others Get the Best of us**, family gets the rest of us





# Negatives for Children

- **Negatively affects child psychology**, deteriorating memory function
- Reduces sleep cycles, **limits creativity**
- **Diminishes communication** between parent and child, shortens attention spans
- Potentially encourages **violent and aggressive behavior**



# **7 Rules for Technology Use in Every Family**

## **In this house...**

1. Technology is a privilege not a right
2. All technology must be parent approved
3. We value people more than technology
4. Devices don't come to the dinner table
5. Chores and homework come before tv or video games
6. We break it we help pay to replace it
7. We use technology appropriately

**... or we lose it**

# Our **First Duty**...

**“Our first duty toward God and our fellow beings is that of self-development. **Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable**” – TE 137**



# Why “Back to the Altar”?

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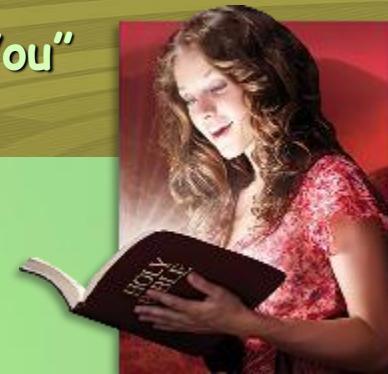
- **Spiritual decline in devotional life**
- **Need for revival**
  - **“Return to Me, and I will return to you.” (Malachi 3:7)**
  - **“Then Elijah said to all the people, ‘Come near to me.’ So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord which had been torn down” (1 Kings 18:30).**
  - **“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs.” (Selected Messages, Book 1, p. 121)**



# POSITIVE EFFECTS OF READING THE BIBLE

**"Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You"**  
(Psalm 119:11)

Something that even the most ardent enemies of the Bible cannot deny is its power to transform people. Paul compares it to a sword that possesses great power.



It makes us see ourselves as we truly are  
(Heb. 4:12)

It keeps us from sin  
(Psalm 119:11)

It is food for our soul (Jer. 15:16)

It makes us grow spiritually  
(1 Peter 2:2)

He gives us life  
(John 6:63)

No other book can impact us like the Bible. When we are willing to incorporate its teachings into our lives, we change for the better.

When we read it with an open heart and ask God for the illumination of the Holy Spirit, our life is transformed.



A man with long dark hair and a beard, wearing a white robe, is kneeling on a grassy bank by a lake. He has his hands clasped in prayer and is looking down. The background shows a large building with a red roof and palm trees under a sunset sky. The image is partially obscured by a white curved shape on the right side of the slide.

# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!

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## 1. SEEK GOD FIRST

- **Matthew 6:33: “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”**
- **“In the morning, O Lord, You hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before You and wait expectantly” (Psalm 5:3)**
- **Jesus Himself, despite His busy ministry, often withdrew early in the morning to pray (Mark 1:35)**
- **Ellen G. White beautifully writes, “Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work.”**

# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!

## 2. BE GROUNDED IN THE WORD

- Read the Bible Systematically –
  - Rather than reading randomly, follow a simple plan. Whether it's a chapter a day or a themed study, consistency matters more than quantity.
  - Col 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...”



# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!

## 2. BE GROUNDED IN THE WORD

- The Word is our Guides
  - “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” (Psalm 119:105)
- The Words Shapes Our Thinking
  - “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” (Romans 12:2)
- The Word Protects us from Deception
  - “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)
- The Word Strengthens Our Faith
  - “Faith comes by hearing... the word of God.” (Romans 10:17)
- The Word Transforms me.
  - Ephesians 5, with the washing of the water of the word, you and I are sanctified.
- A daily study of the Scriptures has a sanctifying, uplifting influence upon the mind. Bind the Holy Volume to your hearts. It will prove to you a friend and guide in perplexity. {CT 138.3}

# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!



## 3. Meditate on God's Word Daily

- Ps 119:97 “Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.”
- Joshua 1:8 “Do not let the book of the law depart from your mouth, but meditate on it day and night so you may be careful to do what is written on it. So you will be prosper and successful.
- “Merely to hear or to read the word is not enough. He who desires to be profited by the Scriptures must meditate” - COL 59
- “We need to study God's Word, to meditate and pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. ..” (Conflict & Courage p 218.5)
- The reason why the youth, and even those of mature years, are so easily led into temptation and sin, is that they do not study the word of God and meditate upon it as they should. – CC 298



# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!

## 4. Pray and Fast with Purpose

- **Philippians 4:6-7** ‘Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.’
- **Matthew 17:21**“This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”
- **Matthew 6:17-18**“When you fast... your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”
- **Psalm 35:13**“I humbled my soul with fasting...”



# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!

## 5. Recognize the Spiritual Battle

- **Ephesians 6:12** For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
- **Hebrew 2:1** ‘We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.’
- **Satan knows that God’s powerful Word makes him powerless. Satan knows that prayer and Bible study are the most powerful weapons humanity can use against him (Eph. 6:17-18; Heb. 4:12), so he does everything he can to stop us from reading and praying.**



# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!

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## 6. Rebuild the Altar of Worship

- 1Kings 18:30 ‘Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come here to me.” They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down.
- Create a Consistent Time and Place
  - Establish a regular time and quiet place for your devotional life. This “altar” becomes a sacred space where you meet with God daily. Consistency builds discipline, and discipline deepens relationship.



# 7 Habits to Enrich Your Relationship with God!

## 7. Live and Share Your Testimony

- James 1:22 “Be doers of the word, and not hearers only...”
- 3 John 1:4 “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”
- Mark 5:19 “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you.”
- “Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power.” (The Ministry of Healing, p. 148)

# Back to the Altar





# 7 Habits to Strengthen Your Prayer Life

# Why “Back to the Altar”?

- **Only 37% of Seventh-day Adventist church members across the globe engage in morning and evening devotions with their families.**
- **Ages 2 – 14 are very critical:**
  - **Values are formed**
  - **Identity is shaped**
  - **Belief systems are established.**



# Impacts of Family Worships

- **It Builds a Strong Spiritual Foundation**
  - Family worship grounds children and parents in God's truth.
    - Deuteronomy 6:6-7  
"You shall teach them diligently to your children..."
    - E.G. White:
      - "The home is the child's first school, and here the foundation should be laid for a life of service." (*Child Guidance*)
      - "The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home." (Ministry of Healing, p. 349)



# Impacts of Family Worships!

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- **IT STRENGTHENS FAMILY UNITY**

- Joshua 24:15 “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”
- Psalm 133:1 “How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”
- Colossians 3:13-14 “Bear with each other... and forgive one another... and over all these virtues put on love...”
- “There should be in the home a bond of union that will bring hearts into sympathy.” (Adventist Home)





# Impacts of Family Worships!

- **IT ENCOURAGES OPEN COMMUNICATION**

- Deuteronomy 6:7 “Talk about them when you sit at home...”
- Colossians 3:13-14 “Bear with each other... and forgive one another... and over all these virtues put on love...”
- “Parents should encourage their children to confide in them... and not close their hearts against them.” (Child Guidance)

# Practical Elements of Family Worship

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- Short and meaningful
  - Set Bible reading
  - Song/sharing
  - Prayer
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- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...” (Colossians 3:16)
  - “Make the hour of worship intensely interesting.” (Child Guidance, p. 521)



How do we encourage personal Devotion?

# Back to the Altar



# How do we encourage personal Devotion?

- Lead by example!
- Speak Up!
  - How are you?
  - How is your devotional life?
  - What are you reading for your personal devotion?
  - What are you reading for family worship?



# Back to the Altar



## SPD Back to the ALTAR

1 follower • 0 following

A Spiritual Revival Initiative focusing on daily personal and family Worship

📌 Religious organization

 Message

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