

BUC FAMILY

A Publication of the BUC Family, Children and Possibility Ministries

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Couple Prayer: The Great Untapped Resource

Pr Les Ackie

The phrase, “The family that prays together, stays together”, is a well-known adage, but one that demands more attention than it gets. There is often an assumption that Christian couples pray with and for each other on a regular basis, but according to research and anecdotal evidence, this is a false assumption. Some estimates place the numbers as low as between 3-10% of Christian couples who engage in daily intimate prayer with one another.

Marriage was designed by God as a spiritual institution in which two individuals are bound together by their faith in Him. Solomon asserts, “a threefold cord is not quickly broken,” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Couple prayer is like the glue, which binds a marriage together, as we are bound together by God.

Marriage statistics make disturbing reading, with the divorce rate in the UK around 40 per cent. That statistic is compounded by research conducted by George Barna, which indicates that Christian couples are just as likely to divorce as non-Christian couples (www.barna.org).

However, significant evidence shows that married couples who pray, study scripture, attend church, and otherwise jointly participate in spiritual activities enjoy significantly higher levels of marital happiness and

satisfaction. A national research study in the United States (1980), cited in Retrouvaille’s International Handbook 2005, found that married couples who attend church together weekly and read the Bible or pray together daily have a divorce rate of approximately 1 in every 1,105 marriages.

In his book Faithful Attraction, researcher Andrew Greeley reports that among all the factors known to contribute significantly to marital happiness, praying together as a couple is “the most powerful correlate of marital happiness that we have yet discovered” (p.292).

Couples who pray tend to experience better mental health; greater ability and willingness to forgive each other; greater gratitude toward their spouse; more willingness to sacrifice for the relationship; greater sexual intimacy, and a higher level of unity and trust with their spouse.





Increasing evidence of the value of couple prayer begs the question, “Why don’t Christian couples pray together?” The main reasons and excuses include feelings of awkwardness or intimidation, lack of time, failure to prioritise and lack of leadership in the home.

However, I suspect that the primary reason has to do with the nature of prayer itself. In her book *Steps to Christ*, Ellen White describes prayer as the “opening of the heart to God as to a friend” (p.93). In other words, prayer is a very intimate experience. Sincere individual prayer involves saying things to the Lord that we would never say out loud to others in casual conversation. But when we learn to pray together as a couple, our spouse will hear us say those intimate things that previously only God heard. That requires a willingness on our part to be open and

transparent with each other.

Sadly, many couples shrink from this kind of self-revelation because their general relationship does not constitute a “safe place” to lay their hearts bare. God states in Genesis 2:24, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” This indicates a relationship that goes beyond simply the physical. The “one flesh” unity God requires of us involves physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual openness.

In his book, *The Spiritually Intimate Marriage*, Don Harvey defines spiritual intimacy as “Being able to share your spiritual self, find this reciprocated, and have a sense of union with your mate” (p.101). In Romans 12:15, Paul urges us to “Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.” There is no place where this willingness to enter into each other’s experience is more important than the marital relationship. Spiritual intimacy is crucial for Christian couples to experience all the blessings God intends, yet too often spiritual beliefs are practiced individually rather than integrated into the couple's relationship.

So, where do a couple begin? In their book, *Couples Who Pray*, Rushnell & Duarte present couples with a practical guide and a 40-day prayer challenge. They assert that, “Those who bear themselves before God in prayer for a minimum of five minutes a day for forty days have achieved extraordinary results” (back cover).

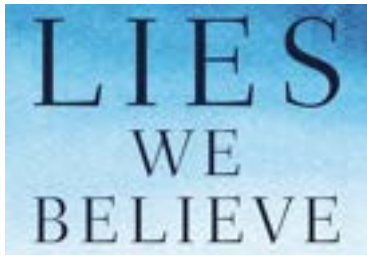
It has been said that, “Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly until we learn to do it well.”

A couple's prayer does not need to be perfect to be effective. Jesus assures us that, “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matthew 18:20). So just do it!

Ten Tips for Couple Prayer

1. More prayer, more power
2. Make time to pray
3. Have an attitude of gratitude and vulnerability
4. Confess and request forgiveness
5. Pray out loud with your spouse
6. Keep it short
7. Use everyday language
8. Pray for your marriage
9. Pray for others and for self
10. Expect God to answer your prayers





Bewitched by Love: 5 Romantic Lies Keeping Christian Singles Stuck

Hilton Samuel

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth...” — Galatians 3:1

There's a kind of spiritual deception that doesn't wear a cloak or carry a pitchfork. It comes wrapped in rom-com logic, Christian clichés, and doctrines that sound deep but have no roots in truth.

Much like the Galatians were bewitched by false teachings, many Christian singles have unknowingly embraced romantic myths that delay, damage, or even derail their love journey.

If you're tired of hoping, waiting, and wondering when "the one" will come along, this is your wake-up call. Here are five lies we must unlearn, and the truth that sets us free:

1. "You Must Feel Romantic Sparks to Start a Relationship"

We've bought into the Disney dream: fireworks, butterflies, music swelling in the background. But real life (and real love) isn't always that cinematic.

Think of love like planting a garden, not lighting a firework. Fireworks fizzle. Gardens grow quietly, steadily, and deeply.

Romantic love is not the only or even the best starting point. In fact, some of the strongest marriages were built not on immediate chemistry, but on mutual purpose, faith alignment, and emotional safety.

A friend of mine married her best friend not because she was head-over-heels from day one, but because over time, she saw his character in crisis, his heart for God, and his kindness when no one was watching. Ten years later, she says the butterflies came but not until after the vows.

2. "There Aren't Enough Godly Men (or Women)"

You've probably heard this lament: "There are no good men left," or "All the godly women are taken." It sounds spiritual, especially when Isaiah 4:1 is misquoted to say seven women will chase one man, but it's really just fear wrapped in scripture.

Let's be real: this lie is like saying there's no food in your city just because you skipped lunch.

When I first moved to England from the Caribbean, I thought there were no insects. Why? Because I never saw any. Back home, you drop a crumb, and ants throw a parade. But one day in England, I left honey on the counter—and I came back to a full-blown insect revival. The ants were always there. I just wasn't attracting them.



Likewise, godly men and women are not extinct. But maybe... you haven't put yourself in the right space to connect. Or maybe the person you're becoming hasn't yet called the right one into your orbit. Psalm 42:7 says, "deep calls unto deep." We don't attract what we want—we attract what we are.

3. "You're Too Old for Love"

Age is just a number. But in church culture, it can feel like a ticking time bomb.



The pressure to marry by 25, have kids by 30, and "settle down" before settling into your calling is a cultural expectation, not a biblical one.

There was a woman named Mary in the small island town where I grew up. She was a radiant, God-loving teacher, well respected, admired, and assumed to be single for life. At 60, she got married. At 62, she was dancing at her wedding reception like someone half her age. Today, she and her husband run a ministry together, and she says it was worth the wait.

God doesn't operate on your calendar. If Sarah could give birth in old age, and if Moses didn't start his calling until 80, don't let your age be your cage.

4. "No One Wants a Single Parent Or Divorcee"

Divorce is heartbreaking. It's real. But it's not a death sentence for your future.

Job 14:7-9 reminds us: "There is hope for a tree if it is cut down; it will sprout again... at the scent of water, it will bud."

You may feel like your heart has been cut down. But hope still lives in you. At just the right scent of healing through community, forgiveness, and God's grace, you can flourish again.

A man I know married a single woman with nine children. None of whom were his. People thought he was crazy. But every morning, he woke up beside the woman he loved, smiling. His joy wasn't limited by her past it was ignited by her heart.

No matter what you've been through, God is still the Author of your story.

EVERY THURSDAY 8PM GMT

ADVENTIST SINGLES PRAYER MEETING

PRAYER MEETING FOR SINGLE ADVENTISTS

THURSDAYS 8PM UK TIME / 3PM EST

ROOM IS OPEN 24HRS A DAY TO PRAY

ZOOM ID: 846 3079 9939 PASSCODE: Pray



Christmas Presence

Pr Les Ackie

It is that time of year when countless expectant children—and many “young at heart” adults—anticipate the Christmas presents they will receive. Yet long after the novelty of those gifts has faded, what we remember most is the precious gift of one another’s presence.

The Apostle Paul writes, “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8). Though Paul addresses material provision, the principle extends further. Scripture repeatedly teaches that the way we treat one another reveals the true condition of our walk with God. Beyond physical necessities, our families carry deep spiritual and emotional needs that deserve thoughtful attention.

Giving such attention requires an intentional investment of time. How we choose to spend our time reveals what we value most. Without deliberate prioritization, our families can easily be crowded out by the pressures of earning a living, transporting children, church responsibilities, and the endless list of tasks that consume our days. Because time is limited, it must be budgeted just as carefully as our finances. Unbudgeted time is quickly swallowed by the tyranny of the urgent or diverted toward our personal weaknesses.

Stephen Covey observed, “No one ever said on their deathbed, ‘I wish I spent more time at the office.’” The deepest regrets in life are often tied to neglected relationships. When God says, “Therefore shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife,” He establishes a new order of relational priorities. This is not only about shifting time from parents to spouse—it is a broader principle of intentionally prioritizing the people who form our family.

As Christians, we sometimes risk neglecting our families in the name of being “about our Father’s business.” Yet our priorities should be: God, family, church—not God, church, family. Ellen White underscores this truth: “Men and women, children and youth are measured in the scales of heaven in accordance with that which they reveal in their home life” (Sons & Daughters of God, 255). She also counsels that if a husband’s work “almost wholly closes the door of usefulness to his family, he should seek other employment” (The Adventist Home, 221). After our relationship with God, meeting the needs of our families must be our highest earthly priority.

Making time for one another involves more than simply being in the same place. Proximity is about location; presence is about connection. True presence means engaging the heart—listening, sharing experiences, and showing genuine interest. Quality time is focused, undistracted attention that communicates love and value. Again, we are urged: “Spend as much time as possible with your children. Seek to become acquainted with their various dispositions, that you may know how to train them in harmony with the word of God” (The Adventist Home, 222).

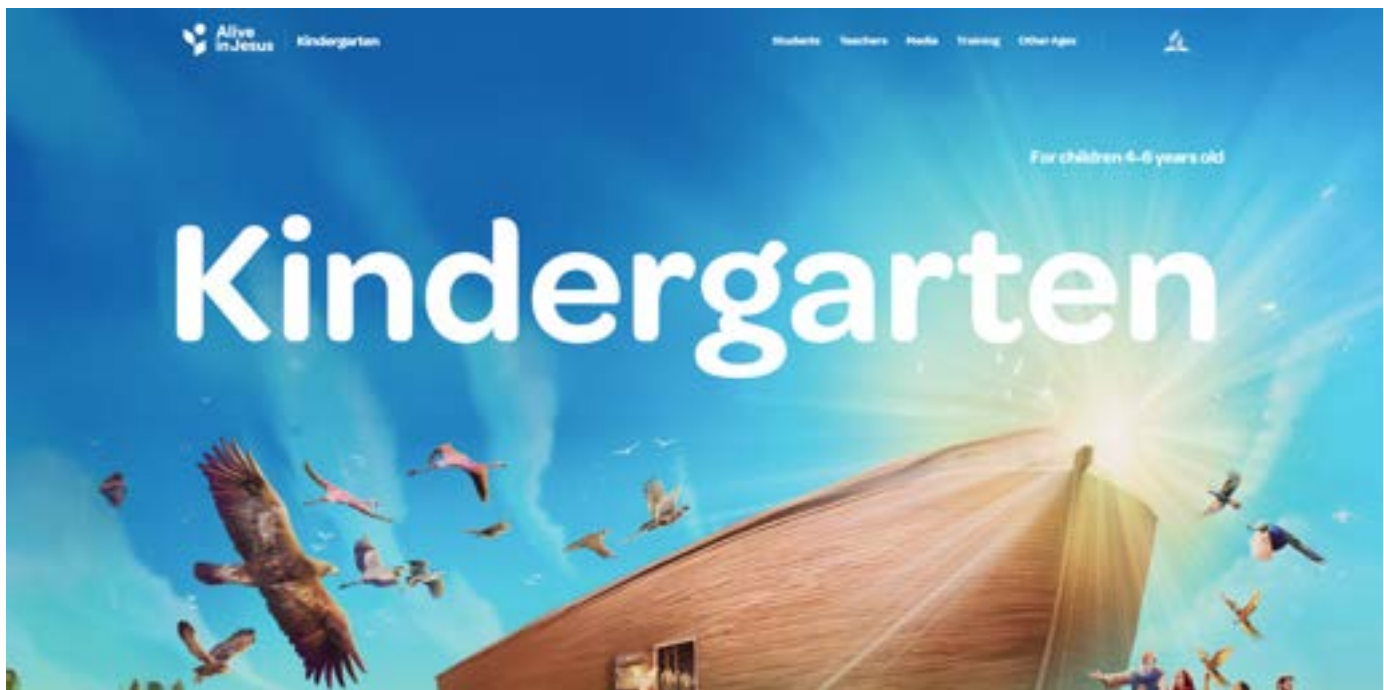
**YOUR
PRESENCE
IS MY
PRESENT**

Christmas is a season of giving, and God has shown us the greatest gift of all: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...” (John 3:16). Our gift of presence to one another is a reflection of His gift to us—the ultimate presence: “Emmanuel, God with us” (Matthew 1:23).



Alive in Jesus

SABBATH SCHOOL CURRICULUM



[Alive in Jesus - Kindergarten Resources](#)



[Alive in Jesus - Primary Resources](#)

2026 Dates for Your Diary

- 10 Days of Prayer: 7-17 January
- Christian Home and Marriage Week: 14-21 February
- Christian Marriage Day: Sabbath 14 February (emphasises marriage)
- Christian Home Day: Sabbath 21 February (emphasises parenting)
- BUC Children's Ministries Leadership Training (Jan - April - Dates to follow)
- Women's Day of Prayer: 7 March
- Mother's Day: 15 March
- Global Youth & Children's Day: 21 March
- Youth Week of Prayer: 21-28 March
- Christian Education Day: 28 March
- TED Family Ministries Leadership Training (FMLT): 27 March - 2 April
- Possibility Ministries Day: 18 April
- BUC Men's Day of Prayer: 25 April
- World Day of Prayer for Children at Risk: 23 May
- Special Needs Camp: Date to be confirmed
- Father's Day: 21 June
- Children's Sabbath: 25 July
- Education Day: 15 August
- End It Now - Abuse Awareness Sabbath: 22 August
- Family Togetherness Week: 5-12 September
- Family Togetherness Day of Prayer: 12 September
- Creation Sabbath: 24 October
- World Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Day: 21 November



SEC FAMILY MINISTRIES

Adventist Family Ministries

ANCHORED IN HOPE

WIDOW, WIDOWERS, AND FAMILIES DAY OF FELLOWSHIP

SABBATH, 6 DECEMBER 2025



Dr. Rio Espulgar



Themble Mapingire



Dr. Augustus Lawrence

VENUE:
JEWS' FREE SCHOOL
THE MALL, HARROW HA3 9TE
10 AM

REGISTER
<https://tinyurl.com/285vvhkt>



LIVESTREAM
 **SECmedia**



Families and Festivities

Navigating the complexity of expectations and realities

Karen Holford
TED Family Ministries Director and Family Therapist

 **MONDAY
DECEMBER 8TH**

 6:00 PM - LONDON
7:00 PM - BUDAPEST
8:00 PM - BUCHAREST

Meeting ID: 891 6962 2808
Passcode: family

You're Invited



SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE

MEN'S MINISTRY COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

PRAYER - GREAT FOOD - FELLOWSHIP

**SUNDAY
07 DECEMBER 2025
@ 10:00 AM**

THE ADVENT CENTRE

37-39 BRENDON STREET LONDON W1H 5JE

F R E E E N T R Y

WE INVITE YOU TO GIVE A FREEWILL DONATION TO HELP SUPPORT JAMAICA.

DRESS CODE: SMART CASUAL





Educating for Eternity

BUC Education Department presents the first
Adventist Educators Association Conference

CALLLED TO BE FAITHFUL

Calling all Teachers and Educators

Join us as we reaffirm our calling to remain rooted in Christ
while navigating modern educational challenges and shaping
minds in today's secular schools.

DATE

13 DECEMBER 2025

TIME

9:30 AM - 5:30 PM

VENUE

NEWBOLD COLLEGE

Moor Close Suite,
St. Mark's Road, Binfield,
Bracknell RG42 4AN



REGISTER NOW

Dr Jeffrey O. Brown, PhD

Associate Editor of Ministry and Associate Ministerial Secretary
of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists





[10 Days of Prayer Children's Resources](#)



Follow for brief reflections on healthy relational principles in the areas of communication, conflict resolution and emotional wellbeing from a biblical perspective

Family Ministries Leadership Training (FMLT)

Understanding, supporting, and reaching families

A joint TED/EUD training programme



Family Ministry Leadership Leadership Training
27 March - 2 April (venue to be confirmed)

STRONG
MARRIAGES • FAMILIES • CHURCHES
MISSION



Adventist
Family Ministries

2026 RESOURCE BOOK

FAMILY, FAITH, AND FOCUS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

WILLIE AND ELAINE OLIVER

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills Training



CPCAB Accredited



STARTING DATE

**27 January
2026**

Scan to
Register



Enquiries

connect@ccscounselling.org.uk

02077 238050

Click to Register

[Click here to register](#)





REAL FAMILY TALK
WITH WILLIE & ELAINE OLIVER

WATCH LIVE SUNDAYS, 6:30 PM (ET), OR VISIT [HOPETV.ORG/REALFAMILYTALK](https://hopetv.org/realfamilytalk)

HopeChannel Adventist Family Ministries

[Click here for Real Family Talk on YouTube](#)



YOU ARE NOT ALONE
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Office Number / Appointments
connect@ccscounseling.org.uk
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"I am not living, I am just surviving."
Together we can make it happen.
Often, it is not the initial experience that creates the overwhelming pain, but the lack of support.
Do not suffer alone
Do not suffer in silence.
CCS is here to support you
Together we can win your struggle.

CCS
Cornerstone
Counseling Services



Facing Difficult times or issues, Need to talk?

The first step is the hardest. Call the NEC Counselling Service Today!
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We can arrange for you to access support.

FORWARD We Go!

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Office: +44 (0) 121 940 4252 Mobile: +44 (0) 7950438804
22 Zula Road, Northgate, North - M61 5DB
www.necadventists.org.uk #sevendayadventist.org.uk

Seventh-day Adventist Church



The Seventh-day Adventist Church values every human being as part of God's creation. We are committed to safeguarding all children and adults at risk who take part in our services and activities.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Seventh-day Adventist Church commits to:

- Promote a safe environment for children and adults at risk of harm
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Provide compassionate care and support for survivors of abuse
- Ensure that those working with children and adults at risk are trained and supported
- Raise awareness of safeguarding responsibilities throughout all church programming and provisions
- Work collaboratively with safeguarding agencies
- Follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised best practice in order to protect the vulnerable
- Implement, maintain and regularly review the procedures outlined in our safeguarding policy



Safeguarding is Everybody's Responsibility

[Click here to download safeguarding posters for your local church](#)

Useful Links

[AdventSource](#)

[Adventist Possibility Ministries](#)

[Adventist Single Adult Ministries \(ASAM\)](#)

[Adventist Special Needs Association \(ASNA\)](#)

[BUC Family Ministries](#)

[BUC Safeguarding](#)

[Care for the Family](#)

[GC Children's Ministries](#)

[GC Family Ministries](#)

[In Discipleship](#)

[Prepare Enrich](#)

[TED Children's Ministries](#)

[TED Family Ministries](#)

[TED Possibility Ministries](#)

[Through the Roof \(Disability outreach\)](#)

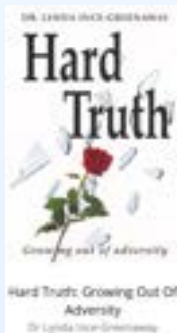
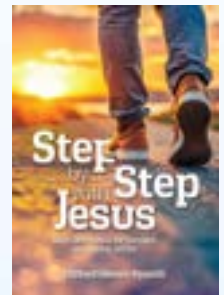
[Women's Aid](#)

Recommended Reading



In *Dejected or Redirected*, Alison Awuku closely examines the work of psychological researchers on the topic of rejection, along with the trustworthy counsel of Holy Scripture, the testimonies of others, and her own lived experience. She empowers us and equips us to handle rejection with this practical guide, which is especially useful for young people.

Step by Step With Jesus. Clifford Owusu Gyamfi's devotional offers a fresh perspective each day, infusing your daily routine with spiritual vitality. The engaging topics, scriptural insights, and practical applications will draw you into a deeper relationship with Jesus. Step by Step with Jesus is a personal invitation to walk hand in hand with the Saviour, step by step, day by day, growing and maturing in your faith.



Hard Truth: Growing out of Adversity, tells the remarkable story of the Lynda Ince-Greenaway's journey towards healing and resilience. The book is a dynamic and compelling story that will inspire readers. It is a story that is personalised, educational and inspirational no matter where people are on their journey. Hard Truth intensifies the importance of self-reflection and personal empowerment. It is written for audiences everywhere and for people of all ages.

BUC Family, Children, Possibility Ministries & Safeguarding



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