

The Holy Spirit

Lesson 15 – The Holy Spirit & Prayer

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Introduction

Why don't we pray more? Prayer sets God in motion. God is far more willing to hear and answer our prayers than we are to pray them. Prayer may be the most underrated and undervalued aspect of the Christian life. Prayer is work. Prayer is a mystery. That is why I believe we struggle with praying.

We often pray for healing and safe travel. Why? When compared to the prayers found in scripture our prayers don't measure up. We need to be more concerned about the spiritual than the material. More about "God's will" and less about "my will." Doing God's will is our greatest concern. We need to focus more on confession, repentance, grace, and forgiveness in prayer than safe travels.

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man**, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. **Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us**, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:14-21)*

This is a prayer. This is what God wants us to pray about...

- Strength and power from the Holy Spirit
- Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith
- Rooted and grounded in love
- To know with all other Christians the love of Christ
- To be filled with the fullness of God
- For God's glory in the church

Why? Because later in Ephesians 6 Paul says our battle against sin and evil is not external but internal.

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18)

Would you say that you pray every prayer in the Spirit? It's a commandment. How can we do that if we don't know what it is? How do I pray in the Spirit?

Praying in the Spirit means that we pray with a conscious awareness that the Holy Spirit is helping us by taking our material thoughts into spiritual expressions. Have you ever had a hard time finding the words to say to God? To be able to express our feelings, our

burdens, joys, heartaches, loneliness, regrets, gratitude, and sorrows is what the Holy Spirit does. The Spirit communicates those feelings to God in “spiritual language.”

1 Corinthians 2 Paul tells us that without the Spirit we cannot understand the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. God can communicate spiritual truths to us, because we have a spiritual nature. But because we have a spiritual nature, we can communicate our desires, our needs to God. That's called prayer.

The indwelling Spirit is involved in our prayers in at least two ways:

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)

1. The Spirit helps us in our weakness, because we don't know what to pray for.

Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” (Galatians 4:6)

2. The Holy Spirit creates a longing in us for God Himself. Not for his blessings, But for God Himself.

The purpose of prayer is to communicate, to share our joys, heartaches, temptations, and struggles with our Father. It is an attempt to know Him better so that we can better understand His word and His will. Pray in the Spirit!