



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Vol. 29 Issue 546

Nov. 15, 2012

Worship Music

[Oh Lord-Terry Clark](#)

[God Your So Good-Terry Clark](#)

[Isn't He-Terry Clark](#)

[The Leper-Terry Clark](#)

Prayer

Lord, please help me refrain from speaking words today that will negatively affect other people. I am so sorry for the times I've "run at the mouth" and said things I shouldn't have said. I realize how wrong this is and how I've stained other people's opinions because I didn't control my mouth and emotions. I am turning to You for help, and I'm asking You to help me control my tongue as I deal with these issues that have festered inside me. Holy Spirit, please help me to overcome the flesh and to allow You to have Your way in me in Jesus' name. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

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If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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1 THEN THEY told David, Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors. 2 So David inquired of the Lord, Shall I go and attack these Philistines? And the Lord said to David, Go, smite the Philistines and save Keilah. 3 David's men said to him, Behold, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more, then, if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines? 4 Then David inquired of the Lord again. And the Lord answered him, Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will deliver the Philistines into your hand. 5 So David and his men went to Keilah and fought the Philistines with a great slaughter and brought away their cattle. So David delivered the people of Keilah. 6 When Abiathar son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, he came with an ephod in his hand. 7 Now it was told Saul that David had come to Keilah. Saul said, God has delivered him into my hand, for he is shut in by going into a town that has gates and bars. 8 Saul summoned all the men for war, to go to Keilah to besiege David and his men. 9 David knew that Saul was plotting evil against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring the ephod here. 10 Then David said, O Lord, the God of Israel, Your servant has surely heard that Saul intends to come and destroy the city of Keilah on my account. 11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? O Lord, God of Israel, I beseech You, tell Your servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. 12 Then David asked, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into Saul's hand? The Lord said, They will deliver you up. 13 Then David and his men, about 600, arose and left Keilah, going wherever they could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up going there. 14 David remained in the wilderness strongholds in the hill country of the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but God did not give him into his hands. 15 David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. David was in the Wilderness of Ziph in the wood [at Horesh]. 16 And Jonathan, Saul's son, rose and went into the wood to David [at Horesh] and strengthened his hand in God. 17 He said to him, Fear not; the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Saul my father knows that too. 18 And the two of them made a covenant before the Lord. And David remained in the wood [at Horesh], and Jonathan went to his house. 19 Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, Does not David hide himself with us in strongholds in the wood [at Horesh], on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon? 20 Now come down, O king, according to all your heart's desire to come down, and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hands. 21 And Saul said, The Lord bless you, for you have compassion on me. 22 Go, make yet more sure; and know and see where his haunt is and who has seen him there; for I am told he deals very craftily. 23 See and take note of all his hiding places and come back to me with the certain facts, and I will go with you. If he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah. 24 So they arose and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the Wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah south of Jeshimon. 25 Saul and his men went to seek him. And David was told; so he went down to the rock in the Wilderness of Maon and stayed. When Saul heard that, he pursued David in the Wilderness of Maon. 26 And Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. And David made haste to get away for fear of Saul, for Saul and his men were surrounding [him] and his men to capture them. 27 But a messenger came to Saul, saying, Make haste and come, for the Philistines have made a raid on the land. 28 So Saul returned from pursuing David and went against the Philistines. So they called that place the Rock of Escape. 29 David went up from there and dwelt in the strongholds of En-gedi.

Chapter 23

Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and they're robbing their threshing floors. So David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said to David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah. And David's men said unto him, Behold, we're afraid here in Judah: how much worse if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines (1Sa 23:1-3)?

Now David didn't have a very brave army at this point, these guys said, "Hey, man we're afraid here. It's even worse if we go to the Philistines."

So David inquired of the Lord again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah: for I will deliver the Philistines into your hand. So David and his men went to Keilah, and they fought with the Philistines, and they brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. Now it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech had fled to David that he came down with a ephod in his hand. [Now it was through the ephod that they inquired of the Lord.] And so it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God has delivered him into my hand; because he is gone into a walled city, now we can surround him, and capture him. So Saul called all of the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. And David knew that Saul was on his way down. So David inquired of the Lord, and he said, Lord will the men of Keilah deliver me into the hands of Saul (1Sa 23:4-11)?

Now David had delivered the city from the Philistines. But yet the men weren't really faithful to David.

and the Lord answered and said, Yes the men of Keilah will deliver you into the hands of Saul. So David and now his band had grown to about six hundred men, they fled from Keilah, and they fled to the area of the wilderness in the strong holds, that were in the mountains, the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into Saul's hand. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness in a wood. And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David in the wood, and he strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knows (1Sa 23:12-17).

Now Saul was becoming aware of the fact that God's anointing was off of his life, and Saul knew that David was going to be the king. What he's trying to do is hold onto the kingdom that he knows is not his. Now Jonathan his son recognized that David was gonna be king also. Jonathan said, "I'll be your right hand man." Jonathan is actually taking a very beautiful attitude towards David. His love was so great that he was willing to let David be exalted. He was willing to just be a helper, a right hand man to David. He was willing

to abdicate the throne for David's sake, to step down to let David rule. "I know you're gonna be king. I'll be your right hand man, don't be afraid. My dad won't catch you. He won't find you because this is what God has in mind." Jonathan was expressing these things to David.

So the two of them made a covenant before the Lord: and David stayed in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house. Then the Ziphites came to Saul in Gibeah, saying, David's hiding with us in the strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hichilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon? Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul; come down to our part and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hands. So Saul said, Blessed be ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me (1Sa 23:18-21).

What a phony character, using spiritual language in such evil things. You know it's possible to just get sort of a spiritual jargon going and you don't have enough discernment to know when to use it. You use it even for corrupt things.

"Praise the Lord. I really ripped him off." It's horrible the way people can use spiritual language for such corrupt things.

"Oh blessed be ye of the Lord. You've shown compassion on me." Oh. Not all who say, "Lord, Lord" are gonna enter into the kingdom of heaven. Lot of people use the right jargon, spiritual jargon but they're just not gonna make it. It's not what you say, it's not what comes out of a man's mouth that defiles him—or it's actually it is which comes out of the mouth, but this dullness out of the mouth with blessings out of the same fountain proceeds bitter and sweet water, blessings and curses. Such things should not be.

So here's the blessing, but soon curses.

Go, I pray you, and prepare, and know and find out the place where he's hiding, and who has seen him: and be careful because this guy is very subtle. Take all knowledge of all of the lurking places where he hides himself, and come and tell me of certainty, and I'll go with you: and it will come to pass, if he's in the land, I'll search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah. And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon. And so Saul also with all of his men went to seek him. And it was told David: wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men were on the other mountain: and David made haste for fear of Saul; and Saul and his men had circled David and his men had encompassed him to take them (1Sa 23:22-26).

So Saul, I mean David had been surrounded by Saul's men. Looks like he's had it.

But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing David, went after the Philistines: wherefore they called the place Selahammahlekoth. [Which is the crag of divisions.] And David went up from there, and he dwelt in the strongholds of Engedi (1Sa 23:27-29).

David now headed again down towards the wilderness area of the Dead Sea. Engedi is about twenty miles probably from where the Jordan comes into the Dead Sea on the West Bank of the Dead Sea. Engedi is a beautiful spot. The word Engedi means, "wild goats." It is a place where there are still a lot of the ibex, the wild goats of Israel. But the neat thing about Engedi, the Dead Sea there is about twelve hundred and eighty-two feet below sea level. Because you are so low, there are springs, because you're at a thousand feet below sea level. Actually, the spring of Engedi is at about, oh eight hundred feet, seven hundred feet below sea level. It just springs out there from the pressure of the underground water and all. There's a beautiful spring and there's the neatest waterfalls, and fern canyons, and wild fig trees growing up the sides of the canyons, and all kinds of caves around there. Just a beautiful place to hide out as far as just, you know, you've got your water, you've got your wild goat to eat, and it's just an excellent place to hide out. A very beautiful little valley in the midst of a vast wilderness. That whole Dead Sea area is just a vast wilderness. But Engedi is a beautiful oasis, and of course because of the heat, it stays warm down there year round. It's very fertile around Engedi, a lot of date palms. They grow excellent watermelons in wintertime and it's just a neat place. That's where David was now hiding out from Saul, there in the strong holds at Engedi. (Through The Bible; C2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Commentaries; 1979 – 1986)

XIII. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND PRAYER

"During the great Welsh Revival a minister was said to be very successful in winning souls by one sermon that he preached—hundreds were converted. Far away in a valley news reached a brother minister of the marvelous success of this sermon. He desired to find out the secret of the man's great success.—He walked the long way, and came to the minister's poor cottage, and the first thing he said was: 'Brother, where did you get that sermon?' He was taken into a poorly furnished room and pointed to a spot where the carpet was worn threadbare, near a window that looked out upon the everlasting hills and solemn mountains and said, 'Brother, there is where I got that sermon. My heart was heavy for men. One night I knelt there—and cried for power as I never preached before. The hours passed until midnight struck, and the stars looked down on a sleeping world, but the answer came not. I prayed on until I saw a faint streak of grey shoot up, then it war silver—silver became purple and gold. Then the sermon came and the power came and men fell under the influence of the Holy Spirit.'"—G. H. Morgan

The Gospel without the Holy Spirit would be vain and nugatory. The gift of the Holy Spirit was vital to the work of Jesus Christ in the atonement. As Jesus did not begin His work on earth till He was anointed by the Holy Spirit, so the same Holy Spirit is necessary to carry forward and make effective the atoning work of the Son of God. As His anointing by the Holy Ghost at His baptism was an era in His life, so also is the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost a great era in the work of redemption in making effective the work of Christ's Church.

The Holy Spirit is not only the bright lamp of the Christian Dispensation, its Teacher and Guide, but is the Divine Helper. He is the enabling agent in God's new dispensation of doing. As the pilot takes his stand at the wheel to guide the vessel, so the Holy Ghost takes up His abode in the heart to guide and empower all its efforts. The Holy Ghost executes the whole gospel through the man by His presence and control of the spirit of the man.

In the execution of the atoning work of Jesus Christ, in its general and more comprehensive operation, or in its minute and personal application, the Holy Spirit is the one efficient Agent, absolute and indispensable. The gospel cannot be executed but by the Holy Ghost. He only has the regal authority to do this royal work. Intellect cannot execute it, neither can learning, nor eloquence, nor truth, not even the revealed truth can execute the gospel. The marvelous facts of Christ's life told by hearts unanointed by the Holy Spirit will be dry and sterile, or "like a story told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Not even the precious blood can execute the gospel. Not any, nor all of these, though spoken with angelic wisdom, angelic eloquence, can execute the gospel with saving power. Only tongues set on fire by the Holy Spirit can witness the saving power of Christ with power to save others.

No one dared move from Jerusalem to proclaim or utter the message along its streets to the dying multitudes till the Holy Spirit came in baptismal power. John could not utter a word, though he had pillowed his head on Christ's bosom and caught the pulsations of Christ's heart, and though his brain was full of the wondrous facts of that life and of the wondrous words which fell from His lips. John must wait till a fuller and richer endowment than all of these came on him. Mary could not live over that Christ-life in the home of John, though she had nurtured the Christ and stored heart and mind full of holy and motherly memories, till she was empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The coming of the Holy Spirit is dependent upon prayer, for prayer only can compass with its authority and demands, the realm where this Person of the Godhead has His abode. Even Christ was subject to this law of prayer. With Him, it is, it ever has been, and ever will be, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." To His disconsolate disciples, He said, "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter." This law of prayer for the Holy Spirit presses on the Master and on the disciples as well. Of so many of God's children it may truly be said, "Ye have Him not because ye ask not." And of many others it might be said, "Ye have Him in faint measure because ye pray for Him in faint measure."

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of all grace and of each grace as well. Purity, power, holiness, faith, love, joy and all grace are brought into being and perfected by Him. Would we grow in grace in particular? Would we be perfect in all graces? We must seek the Holy Spirit by prayer.

We urge the seeking of the Holy Spirit. We need Him, and we need to stir ourselves up to seek Him. The measure we receive of Him will be gauged by the fervour of faith and prayer with which we seek Him. Our ability to work for God, and to pray to God, and live for God, and affect others for God, will be dependent on the measure of the Holy Spirit received by us, dwelling in us, and working through us.

Christ lays down the clear and explicit law of prayer in this regard for all of God's children. The world needs the Holy Spirit to convict it of sin and of righteousness and judgment to come and to make it feel its guiltiness in God's sight. And this spirit of conviction on sinners comes in answer to the prayers of God's people. God's children need Him more and more, need His life, His more abundant life, His super-abundant life. But that life begins and ever increases as the child of God prays for the Holy Spirit. "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" This is the law, a condition brightened by a promise and sweetened by a relationship.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is one of the benefits flowing to us from the glorious presence of Christ at the right hand of God, and this gift of the Holy Spirit, together with all the other gifts of the enthroned Christ, are secured to us by prayer, as the condition. The Bible by express statement, as well as by its general principles and clear and constant intimations, teaches us that the gift of the Holy Spirit is connected with and conditioned in prayer. That the Holy Spirit is in the world as God is in the world, is true. That the Holy Spirit is in the world as Christ is in the world is also true. And it is also true that there is nothing predicated of Him being in us and in the world that is not predicated of God and Christ being in us, and in the world. The Holy Spirit was in the world in measure before Pentecost, and in the measure of His operation then He was prayed for and sought for, and the principles are unchanged. The truth is, if we cannot pray for the Holy Spirit we cannot pray for any good thing from God, for He is the sum of all good to us. The truth is we seek after the Holy Spirit just as we seek after God, just as we seek after Christ, with strong cryings and tears, and we are to seek always for more and more of His gifts, and power, and grace. The truth is, that the presence and power of the Holy Spirit at any given meeting is conditioned on praying faith.

Christ lays down the doctrine that the reception of the Holy Spirit is conditioned on prayer, and He Himself illustrated this universal law, for when the Holy Spirit came upon Him at His baptism, He was praying. The Apostolic Church in action illustrates the same great truth.

A few days after Pentecost the disciples were in an agony of prayer, "and when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." This incident destroys every theory which denies prayer as the condition of the coming and recoming of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost, and confirms the view that Pentecost as the result of a long struggle of prayer is illustrative and confirmatory that God's great and most precious gifts and conditioned on asking, seeking, knocking, prayer, ardent, importunate prayer.

The same truth comes to the front very prominently in Philip's revival at Samaria. Though filled with joy by believing in Christ, and though received into the Church by water baptism, they did not receive the Holy Spirit till Peter and John went down there and prayed with and for them.

Paul's praying was God's proof to Ananias that Paul was in a state which conditioned him to receive the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not only our Teacher, our Inspirer and our Revealer, in prayer, but the power of our praying in measure and force is measured by the Spirit's power working in us, as the will and work of God, according to God's good pleasure. In Ephes. 3, after the marvelous prayer of Paul for the Church, he seemed to be apprehensive that they would think he had gone beyond the ability of God in his large asking. And so he closes his appeal for them with the words, that God was able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. The power of God to do for us was measured by the power of God in us. "According to," says the Apostle, that is, after the measure of, "the power that worketh in us." The projecting power of praying outwardly was the projecting power of God in us. The feeble operation of God in us brings feeble praying. The mightiest operation of God in us brings the mightiest praying. The secret of prayerlessness is the absence of the work of the Holy Spirit in us. The secret of feeble praying everywhere is the lack of God's Spirit in His mightiness.

The ability of God to answer and work through our prayers is measured by the Divine energy that God has been enabled to put in us by the Holy Spirit. The projecting power of praying is the measure of the Holy Spirit in us. So the statement of James in the fifth chapter of his Epistle is to this effect:

"The fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The prayer inwrought in the heart by the almighty energy of the Holy Spirit works mightily in its results just as Elijah's prayer did.

Would we pray efficiently and mightily? Then the Holy Spirit must work in us efficiently and mightily. Paul makes the principle of universal application. "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." All labour for Christ which does not spring from the Holy Spirit working in us, is nugatory and vain. Our prayers and activities are so feeble and resultless, because He has not worked in us and cannot work in us His glorious work. Would you pray with mighty results? Seek the mighty workings of the Holy Spirit in your own spirit.

Here we have the initial lesson in prayer for the Holy Spirit which was to enlarge to its full fruitage in Pentecost. It is to be noted that in John 14:16, where Jesus engages to pray the Father to send another Comforter, who would dwell with His disciples and be in them, that this is not a prayer that the Holy Spirit might do His work in making us children of God by regeneration, but it was for that fuller grace and power and Person of the Holy Spirit which we can claim by virtue of our relation as children of God. His work in us to make us the children of God and His Person abiding with us and in us, as children of God, are entirely different stages of the same Spirit in His relation to us. In this latter work, His gifts and works are greater, and His presence, even Himself, is greater than His works or gifts. His work in us prepares us for Himself. His gifts are the dispensations of His presence. He puts and makes us members of the body of Christ by His work. He keeps us in that body by His Presence and Person. He enables us to discharge the functions as members of that body by His gifts.

The whole lesson culminates in asking for the Holy Spirit as the great objective point of all praying. In the direction in the Sermon on the Mount, we have the very plain and definite promise, "If ye, being evil, [] know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father in Heaven give good things to them that ask him?" In Luke we have "good things" substituted by "the Holy Spirit." All good is comprehended in the Holy Spirit and He is the sum and climax of all good things.

How complex, confusing and involved is many a human direction about obtaining the gift of the Holy Spirit as the abiding Comforter, our Sanctifier and the one who empowers us! How simple and direct is our Lord's direction—ASK! This is plain and direct. Ask with urgency, ask without fainting. Ask, seek, knock, till He comes. Your Heavenly Father will surely send Him if you ask for Him. Wait in the Lord for the Holy Spirit. It is the child waiting, asking, urging and praying perseveringly for the Father's greatest gift and for the child's greatest need, the Holy Spirit.

How are we to obtain the Holy Spirit so freely promised to those who seek Him believingly? Wait, press, and persevere with all the calmness and with all the ardour of a faith which knows no fear, which allows no doubt, a faith which staggers not at the promise through unbelief, a faith which in its darkest and most depressed hours against hope believes in hope, which is brightened by hope and strengthened by hope, and which is saved by hope.

Wait and pray—here is the key which unlocks every castle of despair, and which opens every treasure-store of God. It is the simplicity of the child's asking of the Father, who gives with a largeness, liberality, and cheerfulness, infinitely above everything ever known to earthly parents. Ask for the Holy Spirit—seek for the Holy Spirit—knock for the Holy Spirit. He is the Father's greatest gift for the child's greatest need.

In these three words, "ask," "seek" and "knock," given us by Christ, we have the repetition of the advancing steps of insistency and effort. He is laying Himself out in command and promise in the strongest way, showing us that if we will lay ourselves out in prayer and will persevere, rising to higher and stronger attitudes and sinking to deeper depths of intensity and effort, that the answer must inevitably come. So that it is true the stars would fail to shine before the asking, the seeking and the knocking would fail to obtain what is needed and desired.

There is no elect company here, only the election of undismayed, importunate, never-fainting effort in prayer: "For to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Nothing can be stronger than this declaration assuring us of the answer unless it be the promise upon which it is based, "And I say unto you, ask and it shall be given you."

XIV. THE HOLY SPIRIT OUR HELPER IN PRAYER: "We must pray in the Spirit, in the Holy Ghost, if we would pray at all. Lay this, I beseech you, to heart. Do not address yourselves to prayer as to a work to be accomplished in your own natural strength. It is a work of God, of God the Holy Ghost, a work of His in you and by you, and in which you must be fellow-workers with Him—but His work

notwithstanding."—Archbishop Trench

One of the revelations of the New Testament concerning the Holy Spirit is that He is our helper in prayer. So we have in the following incident in our Lord's life the close connection between the Holy Spirit's work and prayer:

"At that time Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for it seemed good in thy sight."—Luke 10:21.

Here we have revelations of what God is to us. Only the child's heart can know the Father, and only the child's heart can reveal the Father. It is by prayer only that all things are delivered to us by the Father through the Son. It is only by prayer that all things are revealed to us by the Father and by the Son. It is only in prayer that the Father gives Himself to us, which is much more every way than all other things whatsoever.

The Revised Version reads: "At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit." This sets forth that great truth not generally known, or if known, ignored, that Jesus Christ was generally led by the Holy Spirit, and that His joy and His praying, as well as His working, and His life, were under the inspiration, law and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Turn to and read this passage:

Romans 8:26—"Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought."

This text is most pregnant and vital, and needs to be quoted. Patience, hope and waiting help us in prayer. But the greatest and the divinest of all helpers is the Holy Spirit. He takes hold of things for us. We are dark and confused, ignorant and weak in many things, in fact in everything pertaining to the Heavenly life, especially in the simple service of prayer. There is an "ought" on us, an obligation, a necessity to pray, a spiritual necessity upon us of the most absolute and imperative kind. But we do not feel the obligation and have no ability to meet it. The Holy Spirit helps us in our weaknesses, gives wisdom to our ignorance, turns ignorance into wisdom, and changes our weakness into strength. The Spirit Himself does this. He helps and takes hold with us as we tug and toil. He adds His wisdom to our ignorance, gives His strength to our weakness. He pleads for us and in us. He quickens, illumines and inspires our prayers. He indites and elevates the matter of our prayers, and inspires the words and feelings of our prayers. He works mightily in us so that we can pray mightily. He enables us to pray always and ever according to the will of God.

In 1 John 5:14 we have these words: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: "And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

That which gives us boldness and so much freedom and fullness of approach toward God, the fact and basis of that boldness and liberty of approach, is that we are asking "according to the will of God." This does not mean submission, but conformity. "According to" means after the standard, conformity, agreement. We have boldness and all freedom of access to God because we are praying in conformity to His will. God records His general will in His Word, but He has this special work in praying for us to do. His "things are prepared for us," as the prophet says, who "wait upon him," How can we know the will of God in our praying? What are the things which God designs specially for us to do and pray? The Holy Spirit reveals them to us perpetually.

"The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the spirit because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Combine this text with those words of Paul in 1 Cor. 2:8 and what follows: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

"Revealed to us by the Spirit." Note those words. God searches the heart where the Spirit dwells and knows the mind of the Spirit. The Spirit who dwells in our hearts searches the deep purposes and the will of God to us, and reveals those purposes and that will of God, "that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God." Our spirits are so fully indwelt by the Spirit of God, so responsive and obedient to His illumination and to His will, that we ask with holy boldness and freedom the things which the Spirit of God has shown us as the will of God, and faith is assured. Then "we know that we have the petitions that we have asked."

The natural man prays, but prays according to his own will, fancy and desire. If he has ardent desires and groanings, they are the fire and agony of nature simply, and not that of the Spirit. What a world of natural praying there is, which is selfish, self-contented, self-inspired! The Spirit, when He prays through us, or helps us to meet the mighty "oughtness" of right praying, trims our praying down to the will of God, and then we give heart and expression to His unutterable groanings. Then we have the mind of Christ, and pray as He would pray. His thoughts, purposes and desires are our desires, purposes and thoughts. This is not a new and different Bible from that which we already have, but it is the Bible we have, applied personally by the Spirit of God. It is not new texts, but rather the Spirit's embellishing of certain texts for us at the time.

It is the unfolding of the word by the Spirit's light, guidance, teaching, enabling us to perform the great office of intercessors on earth, in harmony with the great intercessions of Jesus Christ at the Father's right hand in Heaven.

We have in the Holy Spirit an illustration and an enabler of what this intercession is and ought to be. We are charged to supplicate in the Spirit and to pray in the Holy Spirit. We are reminded that the Holy Spirit "helpeth our infirmities," and that while intercession is an art of so Divine and so high a nature that though we know not what to pray for as we ought, yet the Spirit teaches us this Heavenly science, by making intercession in us "with groanings which cannot be uttered." How burdened these intercessions of the Holy Spirit! How profoundly He feels the world's sin, the world's woe, and the world's loss, and how deeply He sympathises with the dire conditions, are seen in His groanings which are too deep for utterance and too sacred to be voiced by Him. He inspires us to this most Divine work of intercession, and His strength enables us to sigh unto God for the oppressed, the burdened and the distressed creation. The Holy Spirit helps us in many ways.

How intense will be the intercessions of the saints who supplicate in the spirit. How vain and delusive and how utterly fruitless and inefficient are prayers without the Spirit! Official prayers they may be, fitted for state occasions, beautiful and courtly, but worth less than nothing as God values prayer.

It is our unfainting praying which will help the Holy Spirit to His mightiest work in us, and at the same time He helps us to these strenuous and exalted efforts in prayer.

We can and do pray by many inspirations and in many ways which are not of God. Many prayers are stereotyped in manner and in matter, in part, if not as a whole. Many prayers are hearty and vehement, but it is natural heartiness and a fleshly vehemence. Much praying is done by dint of habit and through form. Habit is a second nature and holds to the good, when so directed, as well as to the bad. The habit of praying is a good habit, and should be early and strongly formed; but to pray by habit merely is to destroy the life of prayer and allow it to degenerate into a hollow and sham-producing form, Habit may form the bank for the river of prayer, but there must be a strong, deep, pure current, crystal and life-giving, flowing between these two banks. Hannah multiplied her praying, "but she poured out her soul before the Lord." We cannot make our prayer habits too marked and controlling if the life-waters be full and overflow the banks.

Our divine example in praying is the Son of God. Our Divine Helper in praying is the Holy Spirit. He quickens us to pray and helps us in praying. Acceptable prayer must be begun and carried on by His presence and inspiration. We are enjoined in the Holy Scriptures to "pray in the Holy Ghost." We are charged to "pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." We are reminded for our encouragement, that "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

So ignorant are we in this matter of prayer; so impotent are all other teachers to impart its lessons to our understanding and heart, that the Holy Spirit comes as the infallible and all-wise teacher to instruct us in this divine art. "To pray with all your heart and all your strength, with the reason and the will, this is the greatest achievement of the Christian warfare on earth." This is what we are taught to do and enabled to do by the Holy Spirit. If no man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Spirit's help; for the much greater reason can no man pray save by the aid of God's Spirit. Our mother's lips, now sealed by death, taught us many sweet lessons of prayer; prayers which have bound and held our hearts like golden threads; but these prayers, flowing through the natural channel of a mother's love, can not serve the purposes of our manhood's warring, stormy life. These maternal lessons are but the A B C of praying. For the higher and graduating lessons in prayer we must have the Holy Spirit. He only can unfold to us the mysteries of the prayer-life, its duty and its service.

To pray by the Holy Spirit we must have Him always. He does not, like earthly teachers, teach us the lesson and then withdraw. He stays to help us practise the lesson He has taught. We pray, not by the precepts and lessons He has taught, but we pray by Him. He is both teacher and lesson. We can only know the lesson because He is ever with us to inspire, to illumine, to explain, to help us to do. We pray not by the truth the Holy Spirit reveals to us, but we pray by the actual presence of the Holy Spirit. He puts the desire in our hearts; kindles that desire by His own flame. We simply give lip and voice and heart to His unutterable groanings. Our prayers are taken up by Him and energised and sanctified by His intercession. He prays for us, through us and in us. We pray by Him, through Him and in Him. He puts the prayer in us and we give it utterance and heart.

We always pray according to the will of God when the Holy Spirit helps our praying. He prays through us only "according to the will of God." If our prayers are not according to the will of God they die in the presence of the Holy Spirit. He gives such prayers no countenance, no help. Discountenanced and unhelped by Him, prayers, not according to God's will, soon die out of every heart where the Holy Spirit dwells.

We must, as Jude says, "Pray in the Holy Ghost." As Paul says, "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." Never forgetting that "the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Above all, over all, and through all our praying there must be the Name of Christ, which includes the power of His blood, the energy of His intercession, the fullness of the enthroned Christ. "whatsoever ye ask in my name that will I do."

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Ezekiel 36

Matthew 5:23; 18:19

Mark 8:22

John 5:13; 14:16

Romans 8:26

1 Corinthians 2:8

Ephesians 3; 6

Philippians 4:6; 4:6

1 Timothy 1:8; 2:1; 2:13

Hebrews 5:7; 5:7

James 1:5

1 John 5:14

Revelation 4:6; 8

("The Reality Of Prayer" ; EM Bounds; Chapter 13-14 ; Edward McKendree Bounds (August 15, 1835 – August 24, 1913) was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and author of eleven books, nine of which focused on the subject of prayer. Public Domain)

Hebrews 12:15 (AMP)

15 Exercise foresight and be on the watch to look [after one another], to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God's grace (His unmerited favor and spiritual blessing), in order that no root of resentment (rancor, bitterness, or hatred) shoots forth and causes trouble and bitter torment, and the many become contaminated and defiled by it—

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 424-426)

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