

SPIRIT OF LIFE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
MINISTRY SCHOOL 3RD EDITION
SESSION 78 – PRAYER PART 21
THE SEVEN MOST IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT PRAYER PART 4

We saw in Lesson 3 that the third most important thing about prayer is that you must forgive when you pray if you have ought [unforgiveness] against any. You must have a forgiving heart if you are going to pray effectually.

**Number Four:
Depend on the Holy Spirit's Help in Prayer**

The fourth most important thing in prayer is to depend on the Holy Spirit to help you in your prayer life. As we've discussed in previous lessons, one important way the Holy Spirit helps us in prayer is to give us utterance in other tongues. Paul discusses praying in tongues in **First Corinthians chapter 14.**

1 CORINTHIANS 14:14,15

“14 For if I PRAY IN AN UNKNOWN TONGUE, MY SPIRIT PRAYETH, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is it then? I WILL PRAY WITH THE SPIRIT, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

1 CORINTHIANS 14:14 (Amplified)

“14 For if I pray in an [unknown] tongue, MY SPIRIT [by the Holy Spirit within me] PRAYS, but my mind is unproductive - bears no fruit and helps nobody.”

The Apostle Paul said in these verses that to pray in tongues is to pray with one's spirit by the help of the Holy Spirit within us. If Paul is correct in that statement, then we need to know about it. We need to pray with our spirit as well as with our understanding. I suppose all Christians everywhere pray with their understanding, but not all pray with their spirit by praying in other tongues. Many do not even know that it is possible to do so.

Some people in their haste and ignorance have said that tongues have been done away with. But, you see, praying in tongues is your spirit praying by the Holy Spirit within you.

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If tongues have been done away with, then just how are you going to pray with your spirit today as the Corinthians did, as stated **in First Corinthians 14:14,15**? Corinthian Christians didn't have a means of praying that we don't have. We have the same biblical means they had - praying with our spirits in tongues with the help of the Holy Spirit. The ability to pray with our spirits is available to us today just as much as it was available to the Early Church.

ROMANS 8:26,27

“26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself [Himself] maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 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.”

Romans 8:26 includes praying with tongues because according to the late Dr. P.C. Nelson, the Greek translation reads, ***“The Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered in articulate speech.”***

Articulate speech means your regular kind of speech. Speaking with tongues is not your regular kind of speech which is speech in your native language. So, this verse includes groanings and it also includes speaking and praying with other tongues.

We must not forget that speaking with tongues is not only an initial sign or evidence of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, but it is a ***continual experience for the rest of one's life***. Speaking in tongues assists one in the worship of God. A preacher once said that praying in the Spirit is a flowing stream that should not dry up, but it will enrich your life spiritually. '

Paul was talking about the Holy Spirit helping us in our prayer life. ***“Likewise the Spirit also HELPETH our infirmities . . . ”*** (**Rom. 8:26**). He was talking about prayer, because he also said in **Romans 8:26** that we know not for what we should pray as we ought. So, the subject in this verse is prayer, and Paul was talking about the Spirit helping us in prayer.

If speaking with tongues and praying with tongues isn't for us today, then that would mean this is one help of the Holy Spirit which the Body of Christ has been denied today. Some people try to tell us that tongues have been done away with, but thank God, tongues

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haven't been done away with. This gift of the Spirit is for this entire Church Age dispensation.

On the Day of Pentecost "... they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). If speaking with tongues was the Spirit giving them utterance, then praying with tongues is the Spirit giving us utterance today. If the Spirit is giving us utterance, He is helping us pray; He is helping us worship God.

ACTS 10:44-46

"44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them SPEAK WITH TONGUES, and MAGNIFY God...."

Therefore, speaking with tongues helps us to magnify God. And the Holy Spirit is available to help us magnify God in our prayer life.

Let us say a few things here. Many people read Romans 8:26 casually and jump to their own conclusion and miss what it says. Some people believe this verse says that the *Holy Spirit does your praying for you*.

One woman told a preacher that after reading this verse, she just didn't pray anymore because she was going to let the Holy Spirit do it for her! But that is not what this verse says. Romans 8:26 doesn't say that the Holy Spirit does our praying for us; it says that **He helps us pray**. The Holy Spirit does not pray apart from the believer.

If the Holy Spirit did your praying for you, then He would be the One who would be responsible for your prayer life. You wouldn't even have to pray because you know He could do a better job than you could. But if someone helps, he doesn't do the job by himself; he just gives assistance to the one being helped.

Likewise, the Holy Spirit is **in you to help you**. You can depend upon Him to help you: ***"Likewise the Spirit also HELPETH our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray***

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for as we ought . . . (Rom. 8:26). This is the fourth most important thing about prayer: We must depend upon the Holy Spirit to help us pray.

Depend upon the Holy Spirit to help you! If we know about things for which we ought to pray, then we can pray with our understanding and we can believe we receive when we pray, and we will receive them. There are things, however, about which we should pray, but we do not know how to pray as we ought. But the Spirit knows, and He can help us, and we can receive answers from God.

We all need the necessities of life, such as being able to pay the rent and buy groceries. And we can believe for the necessities of life because the Bible promises that God will meet all of our needs: **Phil. 4:19** says: "**. . . my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus**". When we pray for the necessities of life, we know what we are praying for; therefore, we have definite scriptures on which to base our prayer.

But there are needs and situations that may arise in our lives about which it is not quite so easy to pray, because we don't know how to pray as we ought. That's when we need the Holy Spirit's help.

Too many times, we pray for the Lord to bless people. About all that does is salve our conscience to make us believe we have prayed for people. That is not sufficient.

Actually, we know that God has already blessed His people, but many of them just don't know it. If they are believers, they are already blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (**Eph. 1:3**). But many of God's people just don't know it, or they haven't appropriated what rightfully belongs to them.

Praying in Tongues When You Don't Know What To Pray For

Believers can enlist the Spirit of God to help them pray about things without even knowing exactly what the needs are. For example, many times in my own life I have told the Lord I didn't know exactly what I should pray for concerning my own children. But as I began to pray, the Holy Spirit would give me utterance to pray out the perfect will of God for them.

If you're going to wait to believe that God heard your prayer until after you see something in the natural, you are never going to get it.

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No, you must begin to pray, and then the Holy Spirit will take hold and begin to help you, giving you the utterance. God hears us when we pray!

When we know there is a problem, we begin praying in tongues, and most of the time before we get through praying, we have the answer to the problem in our spirit. Many times, We've received answers for loved ones while praying in tongues.

Actually, it is best to pray in tongues when you're praying for someone else, especially if you don't know what the problem or need is. You can pray in your understanding as far as your knowledge goes, of course. And you can also plead your case for your loved ones with the Word of God.

EPHESIANS 6:18

“18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

This is a way to pray for your brothers or sisters in Christ. This is prayer that is prayed in the Spirit for all believers - all saints.

On occasion I told the Lord that I didn't know what to pray for. I knew I should pray because I sensed that a certain person was in need or in trouble, but I didn't know what the need was. So, I depended on the Holy Spirit to help me, and I would begin to pray in tongues.

The Holy Spirit Communicates With Our Spirits

Therefore, the best way to get answers is to get into the Spirit when you pray. The best way to get into condition spiritually so you can hear the Lord is to pray in tongues. Since praying in tongues is praying with your spirit, and God is a Spirit (**John 4:24**), then God will communicate with you through your spirit as you pray in tongues.

God very seldom speaks to man through the physical senses. He only does that as a last resort when people are either spiritually dead or too dense to receive from Him any other way. So many have missed it by wanting God to manifest Himself in the physical realm through the physical senses. But Satan is the god of this world (**2 Cor. 4:4**).

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Therefore, if you try to rely on hearing from God in the physical realm through the physical senses, you can quickly get in trouble and throw yourself wide open for satanic deception.

The only time you may miss God is when you may have wanted Him to do something for you in the sense realm; Perhaps you wanted something to register on your physical senses. But all the time on the inside of you, in your spirit, one would know the Holy Spirit was telling you something different. That's the reason we get confused sometimes; we try to do things ourselves, and we try to hear from God apart from the way the Bible teaches us that God speaks to His people.

If you want your spirit to be keener to spiritual things, then you're going to have to exercise your spirit. God isn't going to talk to your head because He doesn't live in your head. The Holy Spirit doesn't come into your head; He comes into your heart. He comes into your spirit to dwell. When you speak in other tongues, *you are not speaking out of your head*, you are speaking out of your spirit. It is your spirit speaking.

Paul said that when he prayed in an unknown tongue, his spirit prayed (1 Cor. 14:14). So, when you pray in tongues, it is your spirit praying by the Holy Spirit within you. And if you groan by the unction of the Holy Spirit, you do it by the Holy Spirit within you.

Have you ever prayed and been so burdened down in prayer that you couldn't think of adequate words to express what you felt? All you could do from way down inside of you was to groan in prayer until the burden lifted. Paul said that is the Spirit helping you. The Holy Spirit is helping you pray.

From the natural standpoint, we know that the mind says this is silly. The natural mind looks at praying with groanings from the natural standpoint and says it's foolish. That's why so much of our praying and worship is in the natural and not in the Spirit at all. It is so sad that in many of our churches we are not even taught spiritual things (that also applies for Full Gospel churches too). Sometimes we only have a form of worship, and the people of God are missing out on so much.

Paul says that these groanings which escape our lips, come up from our spirit. They come up from the innermost being, from what the Bible calls your heart. It's not talking about your physical heart, the organ that pumps blood throughout your body. Most of the time when the Bible talks about the heart of man, it is talking about the spirit of man.

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In these days, because of advanced medical technology, many people are having heart transplants. Once a man heard on the news that someone asked one of the heart-transplant patients how it felt to have someone else's heart. He said that he didn't feel any different at all. Of course, he wouldn't feel any different because he just had someone else's **physical heart organ**. He didn't have another person's **spiritual heart, or spirit**.

It wouldn't be any more wrong to have a heart transplant than it would be to have a kidney transplant. The heart and the kidneys are just physical organs. Doctors couldn't transplant what the Bible calls a man's heart - **that is, the real man** - the spirit man on the inside. The inward man of the heart cannot be transplanted as medical science does in heart transplants. God, of course, recreates man's heart in the new birth, thereby giving man a new heart (**Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 37:26**).

Some religious leaders discuss heart transplants as if it is a moral issue. Some of these religious leaders were well educated, yet they did not know the difference between the physical heart, a physical organ, and the spiritual heart - the inward nature of man.

It may well be that some of these dear souls educated their heads at the expense of educating their spirits! In some cases, one might decide that Ph.D. stands for "post-hole digger"! It seems that a common posthole digger would know more than some of these so-called religious experts!

It is no wonder church people are not more spiritual when you see some church leaders being so natural-minded and materialistic, focusing only on the physical realm. All the worshipping many of them do is only in the natural realm; **they never get into the Spirit**.

Many church leaders don't even know they are spirit beings. They think they are just soul and body; **that is, just mind and body**. But man is not just mind and body. Man is a spirit; he has a soul; and he lives in a body. (**1 Thessalonians 5:23**) The Holy Ghost comes to dwell in man's **recreated human spirit**.

When you are born again, your body becomes a temple of the Holy Ghost because the body is the temple for your spirit, and the Holy Ghost lives in your spirit. He communicates with you or with your spirit, **the real you**, not with your head.

That inward voice of the Holy Spirit oftentimes tries to give us direction, but our mind is many times so cluttered with everything else, that we fail to lean on the Holy Spirit's

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direction. Our mind has been educated through the physical senses or the sense realm. That is the reason the mind needs to be renewed with the Word of God (Rom. 12:1,2).

If your mind is not renewed with the Word of God, even though you are born again and Spirit filled, you will always be a carnal Christian and a baby Christian. You will be body-ruled and sense-ruled.

Too many times, our prayers are prayed out of our minds, but we should also pray in the Spirit with other tongues. Praying in the Spirit with other tongues serves multiple purposes.

First, praying in tongues is a means of spiritual edification. That means it affects us individually and personally. **Second**, praying in tongues is a means of praying for things about which we have no knowledge. **Third**, the Holy Spirit gives us utterance in tongues to help us make intercession and supplication for others. **Fourth**, praying in tongues provides us with a means of worshipping and magnifying God.

Number Five:

The Holy Spirit's Help In Intercession and Supplication

The fifth most important thing in prayer is to depend upon the Holy Spirit to help you pray the prayer of intercession and supplication. The Bible speaks about intercession and says that the Spirit makes intercession for us (Rom. 8:27).

Remember, when we pray the prayer of intercession it is not prayed for yourself. An intercessor is one who takes the place of another. You intercede for others, not for yourself.

Actually, to "intercede" means to act between two parties with a thought of reconciling the two of them. In other words, the two parties are at odds with one another. Therefore, we usually intercede for the lost, although one can intercede for the backslider as well.

On the other hand, to "supplicate" means to make a humble entreaty or to implore God; to entreat for; to ask humbly and earnestly. Therefore, we make supplications for the saints.

By praying in the Spirit in intercession, we can and oftentimes do intercede for unsaved loved ones or even unsaved people we know nothing about. In praying in tongues, We've prayed by the help and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for people who were lost.

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To make intercession also means to take the place of another. So sometimes in intercession you may feel that your own soul is lost because you are taking the place of another. This may not happen to you, and it does not always happen with others either. It's not necessary that it happen, but if it does, yield to the prompting of the Holy Spirit because He is the One who helps us to pray. That is biblical.

Then there is an area of groaning in prayer by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. These groanings come out of our spirits, and they escape our lips. It is the Holy Spirit helping us pray (**Rom. 8:26**).

We can make intercession and supplication in groanings and in other tongues as the Holy Spirit helps us. Intercession is usually for the lost. Supplication is praying for the saints - for believers.

It is important to note that all intercession and supplication *is not done by groanings and by praying in tongues*. You can also pray and should pray with your understanding as far as your knowledge goes. And remember, praying in the Spirit is praying by the inspiration and the direction of the Holy Spirit, whether in tongues or in your native language.

Also, after a while of praying in the Spirit, you will know whether you are praying as a means of building yourself up spiritually and worshipping God, or whether it is intercession or supplication for someone. Many times, you can also tell when you are in intercession or travail for someone who is lost.

As we said, if you are taking the place of a lost one and crying out in groanings and tongues in prayer for the lost, many times you will have the same feeling of being lost in your own spirit, even though you are saved and Spirit filled. You may experience these feelings yourself because you are taking the place of another in prayer.

We are convinced that the reason more of the lost are not being saved is that we don't pray in this manner as we should. During times of praying in tongues, some people have also cried out in English, "Lost! Lost!" It would seem in their spirit that they had such agony, as if they were lost too. (At one time we were lost, too, so we know how a lost person feels.) When they are praying like this, they were not lost but they were carrying the burden, so to speak, as they interceded or took the place of another in prayer.

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At one time we all had that burden of guilt and sin in our own spirit and in our own heart. It has been so long for some of us that we have almost forgotten how that felt.

But, yet, when you intercede for the lost, many times you will have a burden of guilt and of sin - that lost feeling - in your own spirit, in your own consciousness. That's because you are in a sense taking that lost person's place in prayer. You are interceding for them.

Once in a great while some will have a burden of intercession before they are aware of who they are praying for, and then later God may reveal it to them. But many times, after praying in that manner with groanings and travail for someone who was lost, you may never find out who it was for.

Then sometimes in praying that way, the Lord will let you know for whom you were praying for. At times, some have even had a vision about what or for whom they were praying for. They knew at times that they were praying for someone who was lost and prayed with travail.

When you have this travail in your spirit, very often you feel a great upheaval inside of you, like a woman in travail who is about to have a baby. When you travail in the Spirit, you can have similar "birth pangs," so to speak, on the inside of you in your spirit, as you intercede for the lost.

These days even many Full Gospel people have not experienced this kind of intercession for the lost and do not know what we are talking about. There was a time when Full Gospel folks had experienced this kind of travail with groanings, but this is now almost a lost practice among us. And most people coming from denominational circles don't know a thing about it at all.

An experience by a pastor interceding for the lost:

He was holding a meeting once and was praying in the Spirit for his service. For a long time, he groaned and prayed in tongues and then began to cry out, "Lost! Lost!" He felt inside like a lost soul in hell. Then as he continued to pray this way, he had a spiritual vision.

In this vision he saw men and women and it looked like they were floating down a river. There were thousands of them. Some were happy and were singing as they just glided down this river, unaware of what awaited them.

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Suddenly they came to a place like a cliff, and they just plunged off into the depths below. Down, down, down, they went into the eternal fires of hell. He could see smoke and fire coming up from that fiery cavern below. In the vision he saw those people going down into that eternal fire. He saw them screaming and crying out for mercy as they plunged into those flames.

He was praying in the parsonage when this vision occurred, and some others were also praying in the room with him. He would cry out, "Lost! Lost!" And he would cry out for water, as if his tongue were parched from the intense heat of that flame.

It was like that rich man in hell who cried out for Lazarus to dip his finger in water to cool his tongue (Luke 16:24). It felt like he was in flames. He was interceding for the lost. This vision happened to him many years ago, but it is still just as real to him now as it was then. Spiritual things never grow old.

Later on that evening the preacher only preached about fifteen minutes, and every unsaved person in that service came to the Lord! No one invited them to come. No one talked to anyone, but every single lost and backslidden person in that building came as one man to the altar and was saved. Praise the Lord!

In another case, that preacher was praying several days before his Sunday night service and in a vision, he saw a man come to one of his services. He saw how he was dressed. He saw him come to the altar and be saved. When the Sunday night service came, it happened just as the preacher saw it in the vision. The man in the vision was about seventy years of age and had never been to church in his life. No one in that church knew him to pray for him, so no one even knew he would be in the service, but the Holy Spirit did. And that man was gloriously saved!

At one church this same preacher pastored during World War II, the pastor went out to the church while it was still light outside to pray for his Saturday night service. He had a sermon; He had been reading the Bible and praying, and he had something in his spirit. He had outlined his sermon and thought he would preach it that night. But somehow, he didn't feel it was exactly what the Lord wanted for that particular service, so he felt he should spend some extra time there praying.

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He began to pray in tongues, and as he walked up and down the aisle praying he noticed a change in the tongues. He wasn't praying in tongues, he was "preaching" in tongues. He went to the pulpit, not knowing a word he was saying, but he preached a sermon, making gestures with his hands. He knew when he came to the end of his sermon. It was all preached in tongues. He knew when he gave the invitation, because he held his hand out as if he were inviting people to come forward to the altar. But he was there by himself in the church preparing for his service.

Then he had a vision. In the vision, all the people were sitting in place in the church, when he suddenly saw a young woman step out into the aisle. She came down front, knelt at the end of the altar, and was saved. Then he saw a man leave another section and kneel at the altar and he was also saved. He saw himself step off the platform and it was as if he was laying his hands on the woman's head. He saw all of this in a vision. He prayed over the young woman and then he prayed over the man. Then the vision ended.

Suddenly he realized that it had gotten just about dark outside. This was still wintertime, and it was before they went to daylight saving time, so it got dark earlier than usual.

He thought to himself, "This can't be right. This man I saw in the vision lives just outside of town, and he could already be saved, for all I know. He does come to church sometimes. But that young woman, she doesn't even live around here. Her parents come to church, but she doesn't live in this town. She doesn't even live at home."

So, I said to himself, "What I saw in that vision can never come to pass because that young woman isn't even in this area anymore! How could she even come to church? Why am I seeing all this?"

About that time someone drove up to the church, so he turned the lights on in the church and opened the doors. This young woman drove up to the church with her father! It was the very same young woman he had seen in the vision! He thought, "Well, the Lord knew more than I did, didn't He?"

Now that preacher wouldn't have thought to pray for her because her father had said she didn't live in the area anymore, but the Holy Spirit knew she would be at that service. The pastor went home to get ready for the evening service, and then he came back to church.

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When he walked in, he saw the fellow he had seen in the vision sitting right over where he had seen him sitting in the vision. And the young woman was sitting right where he had seen her sitting. He preached his sermon that night, and he held his hand out to give the invitation, just as he had done when he was praying, and they both came forward to be saved. It happened just like he had seen it in the vision.

Intercession and supplication in the Spirit do not just belong to a preacher. It belongs to all of us. It is for every single one of us.

Thank God for the results that have been accomplished but can you see the results that could be accomplished if there were more of us praying that way?

We will continue our study next week.

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¹ Howard Carter, Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Harrison House, Inc., 1976), p. 120.

² Smith Wigglesworth, Ever Increasing Faith (1924; Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), pp. 28-32.