



Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

“Prayer” Series Lesson 5 – March 6, 2016

The Role of the Holy Spirit

I. **Starter Questions:**

What part does the Holy spirit play in God hearing or responding to our prayers? Can we pray without the presence of the Holy Spirit? What does praying in the Holy Spirit mean?

We will break the series into multiple lessons/subject matter:

1. Why Does God want us to Pray?
2. The Effectiveness of Prayer
 - a. Does Prayer Change the Way God Acts?
 - b. Effective Prayer made possible through Jesus
 - c. Who are we supposed to pray too?
 - d. Role of Holy Spirit**
3. Important Considerations for Effective Prayer
 - a. Pray “According to God’s Will”
 - b. Praying with Faith and Obedience
 - c. Forgiveness and Humility
 - d. Praying Continually and Earnestly
 - e. Waiting on the Lord, What about Unanswered Prayer?
4. Praise and Thanksgiving

II. **Scripture Study:**

Romans 8:26-27

26 In the same way, the Spirit “helps” us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless “groans”. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

Interpreters differ on whether the “groans/sighs too deep for words” are the groans/sighs of the Holy Spirit himself or our own in prayer, which the Holy Spirit makes into effective prayer before God.

- Seems likely that the groans are our own, some of best prayers are wordless
- The word “helps” is the same word as used in Luke 10:40, where Martha wants Mary to com and help
- The words do not mean that the Holy Spirit prays instead of us, but takes part with us and makes our weak prayers effective
- So sighs or groans are really expressing the desires of our heart and spirit

Ephesians 6:18

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.

Jude 1:20-21

20 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

To understand, we must realize that the New Testament tells us that many different types of activities can be done "in the Spirit".

- John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day (Rev 1:10)
- Rejoice in the Holy Spirit (Luke 10:21)
- Resolve or decide something in the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:21)
- Have one's conscience bear witness in the Holy Spirit (Romans 9:1)
- Have access to God in the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:18)
- Love in the Holy Spirit (Col 1:8)

Distinctive Activities and Work of the Holy Spirit Through the Bible:

1. Gives Power for Service
2. Purifies
3. Revelation to Prophets and Apostles
4. Gives evidence of God's presence
5. Guides and directs God's people
6. Provides Godlike atmosphere when he manifests His presence
7. Gives us assurance
8. Teaches and illuminates
9. Unifies

These expressions seem to refer to dwelling consciously in the presence of the Holy Spirit himself. His presence characterized by the Godlike qualities of power, love, joy, truth, holiness, righteousness and peace.

Key Point:

To pray "in the Holy Spirit" then is to pray with the conscious awareness of God's presence surrounding us and sanctifying us and our prayers.

III. Group Questions:

1. When Romans speaks of the Holy Spirit "helping us" in our prayers, what does this mean to you and why do we need help?
2. In Romans when it describes sighing or groaning with no words, discuss why we cannot speak words? Have you been there and how can you relate personally to this?
3. In reading Romans 8, do you think we can pray in God's will without the guidance and revelation of the Holy Spirit?
4. What do we need to do to prepare ourselves to "Pray in the Holy Spirit" as described in Ephesians 6? Do we sometimes approach prayer too casually and not prepare ourselves in the right spiritual mindset?
5. To be in the "conscious awareness of God's presence" and sanctifying us; discuss the other things we must do to be put in a position for "effective prayer".