

Beyond All Measure

Interceding with The Holy Spirit



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. 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. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ✠ Romans 8:26-28

Measures in Prayer & A Personal Journey

1. Making Room for the Spirit ✠ Perhaps God is leading you into a season of training or renewed understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, both in your formation and in your prayer life. As we see in Paul's letters, he was a man who combined the fullness of the life of Christ in his inner man with devotion to loving and nurturing believers. His ministry sprang from the love and purity of Christ living in him. He was also the one who taught the early church and succeeding generations how to embrace the work of the Holy Spirit as the essential provision of God for what the church was meant to be. This handout is an outline of ways to expand our boundaries and measures in prayer. Its message is an invitation to choose a practice of asking for and welcoming the Spirit's life-long nurture of our praying heart.

You will notice this ✠ sign throughout the handout, marking the kinds of questions that promote our growth.

2. Training ✠ In I Corinthians 4:14-15 Paul observes that though his "dear children" have many guardians, they do not have many fathers, such as himself. Guardians are teachers and caretakers—fulfilling necessary roles that may not require the devotion of a father. This comparison is very helpful in understanding the intercessory role of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is both a trainer and the expression of God's loving heart, interceding from that love.

Training: "The process of learning the skills you need to do a particular job or activity. When you are in training for a competition, you exercise in a way that prepares you for it." *Cambridge English Dictionary*

The Spirit trains us in all forms of prayer, e.g., petitioning God for our needs, praying for help, wisdom, direction, comfort, warring in times of crisis, and also, in deeper, more

personal intercession. Paul's devotion —as a "father," illustrates this deeper measure of prayer.

Personal Training ✠ Training is available to us if we will ask the Holy Spirit, ✠ "teach me to pray—train me to pray according to Father's heart and will." Growth in prayer is an individual journey, designed and led by God's Spirit.



✠ In the Spirit's training we develop skills through practice. We "co-labor" with Him in our life situations learning to trust and submit to His discernment! We become sensitized to the nuances of His voice, His emotions and His Presence with us in various circumstances. For example, He can instruct us in ways that may seem illogical and we will know the difference between our thoughts and His voice and leading. (See Paul's story in Acts 16:6-10)

✠ Our training in prayer will be tailored to us. *How do I think? What is my communication style? What moves me? In light of my personal history, how do I identify with the need of someone else so that He can involve me in intercession for that person? What are my spiritual gifts, strengths and skills. What training belongs to God's particular call(s) on my life?*

✠ The Holy Spirit intercedes deeply for God's people according to His will, working all for good for those who love and serve Him (Rns 8:26-28). He will teach us how to carry the Father's heart—His deep love, as well as His will for those we pray for. We will be as invested in the outcome as Paul was for His "beloved children."

✠ Asking Him to teach us to pray is a launching out! We place ourselves in the hands of One who knows us better than we know ourselves, and who searches all things.


Such confidence we have through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything or ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

II Corinthians 3:4-


The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.

I Corinthians 2:10b-13

School of Prayer & Different Kinds of Calls

ALL | We are all called to pray according to God's will over the affairs of our lives, and for others. As we increase in sensitivity to His leading we notice when He is nudging us to pray.  We form the habit of asking how we are to pray for different situations, people, etc.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES | As we develop skills and strengths we may find that God gives us unique "assignments" that draw on our experience in prayer and other aspects of our background and personality.

Intercession may not be our primary ministry but God will use us in particular ways at particular times. We are willing to have a certain focus or assignment. We will sense when we're done.  *Personal Example: Image of my role: parachuted into different contexts at different times: short-term missions—definite purposes. One situation: given specific prayer and impression for several in a group. I had only one opportunity to share with someone what I had prayed for them. I knew He would use the other prayers without my sharing. In this kind of prayer we learn to be alert over a situation without assuming it will be ongoing.*


DEFINITE CALL AND GIFT | Some are like "go-to" people, always eager and willing pray—to "carry" with others things God wants to accomplish. Sometimes they support the person praying, but not the concern on their heart. They may serve as a "covering" in the Spirit, enabling someone else to break through in some way. They have a heart motivation to intercede and a gift of working with the Spirit.


A LIFE WORK | Intercession may be the primary call

Widow Anna was in the temple every day, fasting, praying and worshipping. When Jesus' parents brought Him to the temple as a tiny baby, she recognized His uniqueness in the history of Israel (Luke 2:36-38).


A couple with a large sphere of influence: requires daily sensitivity to their assignments which may include intercession for social and political issues. At times they travel to other states or countries; God shows them why they're there and what to pray.

School of Prayer & Intercessory Work of The Spirit

He reveals truth – convicts hearts – equips and uses us in many ways so we may play our role as intercessors standing between persons we pray for and our heavenly Father (see John 14, 15, 16).  "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you" (John 16:13-14).

 The Holy Spirit will specify how He wants to apply truth as we simply ask. For example, as we pray for someone He may give us a specific sense of what needs to happen, for example:


- » remove blinders | open spiritual eyes to perceive conviction of truth and sin
- » change values held by person | "declutter" – things that aren't life-giving to lose their hold ... clear the way for God's counsel
- » give person hunger for the good; tire of substitutes
- » quieted heart / person able to hear Him


 Ask for whatever provision we feel we need to respond to the kind of prayer He is asking of us. We are asking for an entry point or a clarification of what God is after in a situation:

- » Long-term ... an overview kind of prayer
- » Short-term ... a crisis, a turning point or trajectory that God wants to turn
- » Something too deep for words ...
- » Words that describe what God sees and what He is after
- » What His will is / purposes for this situation or person that you are to agree with and pray into

CREATIVITY AND LANGUAGE OF THE SPIRIT | The Holy Spirit communicates in ways that correspond to our human faculties, for example:

- vision | images and symbols
- hearing | language, words
- emotions* | tears, peace, anger, joy, grief, etc.
- memories | ability to relate to, identify with others
- human spirit/soul* | intuition and spiritual awareness; we sense pressure, darkness, evil, and may experience the weight of waging war on someone's behalf, to move spiritual blockages (see Eph. 6)

*  In these areas the Spirit may pray "sighs too deep for words," i.e., "travail" (Rns. 8:26), and we need to ask for understanding of how He is praying, and let Him train us. He is releasing some-thing too deep for words. In the moment we may not know what that is, but we can ask Him afterward to show us if we need to know what He was praying.

Praying the Word of God  Praying scripture, and asking the Lord for particular scriptures to pray in a situation, is part of every facet of intercession. The language of scripture brings us into His presence like nothing else, and connects us to His truth and heart because it is God-breathed. (See p. 4 for scripture examples)

Luke 15:30

His Father was filled with compassion



1. Send Me

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8).

We can tell God we are willing to carry His love for someone He wants to reach, to be a "father" or "mother" with a deep heart devotion that He would give us for them.

What the Lord sends us to do, individually, He will equip us to do by His Spirit. This includes the prayer "assignments" that will serve God's purpose and strategy.

Authority in prayer arises from our own prayer lives. Confidence is built into us as we develop trust and experience in the Holy Spirit's ways and leading.

As we develop – as we move more in His leading and gifts we are:

- careful not to use them in our own strength
- careful not to display them as credentials
- careful to honor Him and see ourselves as co-laborers in His work





He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." John 20:22


2. Ask Lots of Questions

One of the primary ways we open new growth in the Spirit is to ask open-ended questions that invite Him to impart to us all that we need for what we're sent to do in Jesus' name.

- » The Holy Spirit is not an optional component of our faith.
- » The Lordship of Christ is facilitated in our lives and ministry by the Holy Spirit. Is He, the Spirit, in a position of Lordship in your life?
- » We can witness to our experience with the Holy Spirit, but we cannot give it to another. Each of us has to know Him for ourselves.

 Ask the hard questions: Have I compartmentalized You? Have I relegated You to a lesser place as part of the Trinity? Have I stepped back, content with my experience as it is when You have called me to keeping growing?

-  Ask the Lord to deepen your experience in the Spirit:
- ~ the fruits of the Spirit in your character (Gal. 5:22-24)
 - ~ the gifts of the Spirit in your serving (I Cor. 12 and 13)
 - ~ the training of the Spirit in your prayer life
 - ~ your relationship with the Holy Spirit as His temple and instrument

 Contemplate Paul's letter to the Corinthians (printed here / I Cor. 3). Ask the Lord to show you what is on His heart for you as one in whom the Spirit dwells and works.

I Corinthians 3

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? ⁴ For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings?

⁵ What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. ⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. ⁹ For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰ By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

¹⁶ Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

¹⁸ Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become "fools" so that you may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He catches the wise in their craftiness"; ²⁰ and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile." ²¹ So then, no more boasting about human leaders! All things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³ and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.



PRAYING THE SCRIPTURE

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Gal. 5:25

In her talk, Dawn Lundgren shared about the effectiveness of praying the prayers of Paul over those in her congregation. Below are some scriptures used most often.

Ephesians 1:17-19a I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 3:16-19 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Philippians 1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 1:9b-12 We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.

SENT BY GOD

HIS WORD—Isaiah 55:10-11

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to my empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

WORKERS—Matthew 9:38

Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

THE HOLY SPIRIT/ADVOCATE—John 16:7

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

BELIEVERS—John 17:18

As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO EQUIP AND EMPOWER HIS CHURCH—Acts 1:4-5; 7-8

▪ *On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

▪ *He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*



Quiet Reflection + The Prayers of a Devoted Heart

Second Saturday • January 12, 2019

Give ear to me and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live Isaiah 55:3a • Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you James 4:8a. | These questions are meant to help you dialogue with the Lord, sharing heart-to-heart. Choose the ones that seem most significant for your life at this time. Before you begin, quiet your thoughts. Ask for His peace to flow into your spirit.

1. FULLNESS OF CHRIST ♦ The Spirit works in us to make room for Christ to fill us so that we live out of His abiding Presence. Paul Currie shared out of his own experience how God disciplines us to produce obedience, strengthening our spiritual muscle to also strengthen our soul. Our vulnerability and trust before God replaces fear and shame. The fruit is a strengthened heart, growing from fertile soil. We blossom and grow deeper as a result. We bear His image—a witness to others of His love and purposes.

How is your experience of the Spirit's inner work similar to Paul's? Let the Lord speak to you about the areas you struggle with and how He would have you open them to Him.

♦ Dawn Lundgren: At times we feel a deficit—an area of want and need in our lives. We can blame or question God and His desires for us. In fact, He IS filling up this area, but in His way, not ours. How do you relate to this? What does God want you to see about the work He is doing in you?

2. DEVOTED HEART ♦ God is consistently good. As we respond to Him in trust our relationship with Him deepens, opening us more and more to His love. Our prayers will spring from the well of that love creating the kind of devotion the apostle Paul spoke of.

▣ Let the Lord speak to you personally about carrying God's love in intercession for others. (Do you have questions for Him?)

▣ What more would He have you experience as His beloved child? [Draw a picture of how you see that relationship and ask Him for an image of how He sees it.]

The Creativity of the Holy Spirit

Journaling is meant to extend beyond processing of feelings and thoughts. One of its main values is in giving God time to speak to us! For example:

☛ Listen

Is He asking questions of you?
Is He providing much needed counsel—His version of your inner thoughts?

☛ Dialogue

Conversation with the Lord brings much understanding and draws us closer to Him.

~ Invite Him to speak to you. Wait in the quiet. Respond. Wait again, etc.

~ Write a letter, poem or psalm to express your heart.

☛ Images that Speak

~ Draw a picture or symbol of what is on your heart.

~ Ask Him for an image that depicts how He sees you or something you're concerned about at this time.

☛ Editing Your Story

Ask Him to bring to light any assumptions or perceptions embedded in your heart and story that are not true. What is true that He would write in place of what is written there?

☛ Quiet

Invite the Lord to minister to you in the quiet. Whether with words or in the simple awareness that He is present with you, let Him "restore your soul" in whatever way you need. • You may want to journal and reflect on this time later.

3. HOLY SPIRIT AND MYSELF ♦ Out of your own experience, consider these dimensions of the Holy Spirit and His work.

- ▣ We “co-labor” with the Spirit in prayer.
 - What questions/responses do you have about working with Him as He prays through you?

 - Ask Him to show you how He sees your ministry in prayer and how He would encourage you to keep growing, to move you toward the full measure of what He has for you as an intercessor?

- ▣ Chris mentioned the various ways that the Spirit’s language and creativity correspond with how we are designed. He prays through us and speaks to us in a variety of ways.
 - How do you want to grow in this dimension of intercession? Ask Him to expand your experience in the ways you’ve identified. Take time to let Him speak to you about what gifts He has for you.

- ▣ Chris mentioned our different “calls” and styles of intercession. How do you see your role as an intercessor? What are your strengths, weaknesses and desires for growth this area of prayer?

What else is on your heart today? In the quiet, let the Lord’s presence settle on you. Listen for whatever He might say to you. You may want to just be with Him in this quiet space. Or, you may want to dialog with Him, or just journal and pray about the areas of your life where you need His counsel and encouragement.

MAKING ROOM ♦ DEEPER ROOTS | ABUNDANCE OF FRUIT

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Gal 5:25



- Our handout outlines several avenues for opening up our prayer lives so that the Holy Spirit can continue to develop our skills and depth of understanding of His ways, and His passion to express the saving love of Jesus. It is necessary to consider how we want to respond to Him—how we would pray about being sent and trained, etc. We can think of our prayer life as a tree that has room to put down deeper roots, and the capacity to produce more and better fruit. At the center of that tree is our own heart—a living part of us that God would use to extend His love through our Spirit-generated prayers.

By His Measures: What are your thoughts and prayers about opening yourself to more of His work through you?

~ Your hunger to grow in the ways of the Holy Spirit | beyond precepts to knowing the Person of the Spirit

~ Asking the Lord to “send” you – to be open to His prayer assignments or His particular call on your life

~ Asking the Lord to train you – to lead you *individually* in the development of your prayer life

~ Sharing with Him about the roots of love that you need in your own heart – what does He want you to understand about that deep love in His heart for you

~ Asking the Lord for new vision—fresh appreciation of the work and equipping of the Spirit, including:
the gifts of the Spirit

the fruits of the Spirit

the Spirit’s role as the “searcher” of hearts and the one who intercedes according to Gods will

the Spirit’s role as our teacher and trainer