

Study on the Holy Spirit

Study # 3

Prayer

For the next two lessons we will study prayer.

Why do we need to study prayer if we are studying the Holy Spirit?

Prayer is a very important part of any ministry, anywhere from the gift of “Helps” to the gift of “Pastor”.

Speaking of pastors, any Pastor will always be happy to know that you are praying for them. Start praying for him this next week, and then tell him on Sunday that you have been praying for him all week. I’m sure he’ll be blessed just knowing that you care enough for him and the church that you would pray for him.

But what about others? There are others doing service or ministries in the church, or even outside of the church that need your prayers as well.

Who do you know in the church, or outside of your church that’s serving and/or ministering to others?

Pray for them this week, and at the end of the week tell them you have been praying for them.

Don’t always look for the ones that stand out like an Elder, or Deacon, but think about the one(s) who sweep the floors and clean the bathrooms. What about the Sunday school teachers that teach the children?

Maybe you don’t know who does these unseen tasks in the church, ask someone like the Pastor or an Elder.

So pray for others this week, and I pray that you will enjoy it so much that you will continue to pray for others everyday after this week.

Let’s start off this week looking at someone in the Bible who didn’t pray when the Lord asked him to.

- ***Matt 26:33-35 Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble." Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And so said all the disciples.***

Here we remember that Jesus told Peter that he would deny Him.

How many times do we boast, thinking that we are strong enough to handle something. Then what happens? We fall flat on our faces and end up praying for forgiveness instead of praying before hand for strength.

Notice that Jesus was concerned that Peter was not praying that he would not fall into temptation.

- **Matt 26:40-41** *Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

So then we end up just like Peter, falling asleep, or we get too busy trying to fix things ourselves without praying first and seeking the Lord.

- **Phil 4:6-7** *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

How many times do we pray when we are anxious about something, or feel we are in desperate need?

Does God always answer right away?

Sometimes He does, but a lot of times He doesn't.

God teaches us through our situations, and it also reminds us that He is in control in every situation.

If God gave us everything we asked for, we would be miserable. God knows what we need even before we ask Him. But He also knows what we don't need even though we ask Him!

- **Phil 4:8-9 (NLT)** *And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you.*

Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Prayer is not going to God with a list of things that you want. If you have a list to take to God, let it be a list of things that He wants, or that others need. This is *true and honorable and right*.

- **Luke 18:1-8** *Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' " Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"*

Don't give up on praying for others, I've heard of people that have prayed for 50 years for someone to be saved, and it did finally happen. It's God's will that none should perish, but that all would come to repentance. If you pray God's will He will be pleased!

Don't ever forget to thank God for the things He has done!

- **Col 4:2 (Living)** *Don't be weary in prayer; keep at it; watch for God's answers, and remember to be thankful when they come.*
- **Col 4:2 (NASB)** *Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; (underline mine)*

Think of some things that God has done for you in the past, and thank Him for what He's done.

I try to spend at least one time a day thanking God for all He's done for me, without asking for anything. It's not as easy as it sounds. But try it this week; just spend time everyday thanking God for all His blessings in your life.

- **1 Thess 5:16-18** *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (underline mine)*

Verse 17 *pray without ceasing* has always been a favorite of mine; I try to encourage others in this also, and I'm sure you will here me say it over and over **PRAY WITHOUT CEASING!**

It also says in verse 16 to **"Rejoice always"**. How can you be happy when it seems your world is falling apart all around you?

Do you want to know my secret? It's spending just as much time with Him during those good times as I would if I was hurting.

We know when we go through things, we seem to spend a lot of time in prayer and at church, but then when the storm is over, we spend less time with Him, until the next storm.

Don't wait for things to get bad to spend time with the Lord, do it now. Pray without ceasing and spend time in His word everyday. You will see when the storms come that they will be easier to take.

"But what about now," you may say. *"I need help now."*

God says:

- **Prov 3:5-6** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

- **John 14: 13-14** *And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

If you read only part of verse 14 by itself “*and whatever you ask in My name, that I will do*” you would think that God is a Santa Claus, but notice the rest of verse 13 says “*that the Father may be glorified*” not for our pleasure, but GODS! (Also see James 4:3)

- **John 14:12-14** *Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

It is very important when you study the bible, to read the entire Chapter or even book of the bible that you are studying. If not, you can take things out of context like we just saw here in John 14:13.

Notice the purpose of asking in prayer is noted in verse 13 *that the Father may be glorified*. Once again not for our glory, but the Fathers!

- **John 15:7-8** *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

Verse 8 shows once again how the Father is glorified.

Notice it says in verse 7 “*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you*” This means that if you are walking with Jesus, your desires will be His desires, not your own, and you will pray His will not your own.

But if you’re not walking with Jesus, you will pray your desires like it says in James 4:3.

- **James 4:3** *You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*
- **1 Sam 28:6-7** *And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets. Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor."*

How many times do we run to the world if God doesn’t answer our prayers, or if He doesn’t answer in the way that we want Him to, like Saul did here?

Think of Abraham and Sara, they prayed for a child and God said He would bless them with a child. But they didn’t want to wait on God; they wanted a child in their time, not God’s.

They did have a child, but it wasn’t Sara’s, it was Sara’s handmaid who bore the child. But God still had His plan, and Sara did have a child, in God’s timing, and this child was blessed.

- **1 Sam 28:16-19** *Then Samuel said: "Why then do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? "And the LORD has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. "Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. "Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."*

Although Saul went to the world for an answer, God still spoke to him. And because of Saul's disobedience (not just here, but in his reign as king) the answer was ***tomorrow you and your sons will be with me***. Not only Saul but also his sons were to die in battle the next day, and if you read on, you will see that he and his sons did die in battle.

- **Prov 21:13** *Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor Will also cry himself and not be heard.*
- **Prov 28:9** *One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.*
- **Isaiah 1:15-20 (NLT)** *From now on, when you lift up your hands in prayer, I will refuse to look. Even though you offer many prayers, I will not listen. For your hands are covered with the blood of your innocent victims. Wash yourselves and be clean! Let me no longer see your evil deeds. Give up your wicked ways. Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the orphan. Fight for the rights of widows. "Come now, let us argue this out," says the LORD. "No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you as white as wool. If you will only obey me and let me help you, then you will have plenty to eat. But if you keep turning away and refusing to listen, you will be destroyed by your enemies. I, the LORD, have spoken!"*

We all know that God hates sin. But did you know that sin could hinder our prayers. What's been going on in your life lately? Have you been truly walking with the Lord or just pretending.

Maybe you're a Sunday Christian. You go to church on Sunday and put on a mask, but as soon as you leave, your back to your old self again. No change in your life or life style.

God says, ***"No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you as white as wool.***

Ask and He will forgive you! Start walking with Him right now, and no longer with the world.

- **James 1:6-8 (Living)** *But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to tell you, for a doubtful mind will be as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind; and every decision you then make will be uncertain, as you turn first this way and then that. If you don't ask with faith, don't expect the Lord to give you any solid answer.*

Trust in the Lord. Remember Faith, not Feeling!
What, you never heard that saying before?

Feelings *are so deceiving.*
Feelings *are what you see at the present time.*
Feelings *are NOT trusting in God.*

- **James 1:16-17** *Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*
- **Heb 11:1** *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*
- **Prov 3:5** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;*
- **Psalms 18:1-6** *I will love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies. The pangs of death surrounded me, and the floods of ungodliness made me afraid. The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry came before Him, even to His ears.*
- **Micah 7:7** *Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me.*

Wait upon the Lord. He will and does hear you. He knows what He's doing.
If you were to look back on your life and think about some of the things that you prayed for and that God didn't answer or said no too. Are you happy He didn't answer or said No? Or maybe He did answer, but not in the way you expected Him to. Did it turn out better God's way?

I'm sure the answer would be yes to both of these questions

Maybe you're not a believer yet. You may still have questions.
Ask God; He will do everything to help you believe in His Son Jesus.

In fact, He already has done everything. He has given His only Son, Jesus, to pay the price for your sins.

All you have to do is except Jesus' sacrifice for your sins and believe that He paid the price for you on the cross. You are forgiven if you ask, but you have to ask.

Remember what Jesus said, ***“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”*** Matt 7:8

Here is a prayer you can pray right now to ASK JESUS to forgive you;

Jesus, I do admit that I am a sinner; I believe that you paid the price for me on the cross. I believe that your blood has cleansed me of my sins, and made me white as snow.

I ask you now to be my Lord and Savior. Help me to do what is right, and not to continue in the things I have been doing.

Fill me with Your Holy Spirit, and may I share what You have done for me with others. I ask this in Your name Jesus. AMEN!

If you just prayed that prayer, you are now a Christian, and someday we will see each other in heaven.

Please E-mail me to let me know that you just prayed this prayer.

This ministry NEVER asks for money. I only want to rejoice with you in what the Lord has done.

Next week we will continue on Prayer, and the following week we will start looking at an overview of the gifts.

God bless all of you that are doing this study. Please share this study with others.