



PRAYER THAT WORKS

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Study 3

OUTLINE

- Follow through on the homework from the last study
- What a difference the Baptism with the Holy Spirit makes
- Praying as led by the Spirit
- Praying for the gifts of the Spirit

WHAT A DIFFERENCE THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT MAKES

It was the 1870s. Dwight L. Moody, of Chicago, had a passion for souls. He was a good evangelist. But something was missing and he knew it. His spiritual condition was not particularly comforted by two ladies in his church who would say to him after each time he preached, "*Mr Moody, you need the Holy Spirit!*" He had dismissed these comments as being the ranting of two crackpot women. But then the tragic Chicago fires happened and it drove Dwight Moody to his knees seeking God for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. After crying out to God he received what he was praying for. The immediate result was that Dwight L. Moody went from being a good evangelist to becoming a *great* evangelist. This kind of story is repeated many times over down through the centuries in such men as Savonarola, Count Nicolas Ludwig Von Zinzendorf, John Wesley, R.T. Kendall.

Praying In The Spirit

1. Read John 16:7-14 and note at least 5 things Jesus said the Holy Spirit would do *in* the believer-

Some people think of the Holy Spirit as merely “an energy force”, but the Holy Spirit is a *person*. He (not “It”) demonstrates all the attributes of a person, according to Scripture.

2. Match the following Scriptures with the personality traits of the Holy Spirit-

__ 1Cor. 2:11	a. He speaks
__ Eph. 4:30	b. He thinks
__ 1Tim. 4:1	c. He can be lied to
__ Acts 5:3	d. He feels

But He is not merely a person, He is God. We know this because the Bible says He possesses all of the unique qualities of God- He is *eternal* (Hebrews 9:14), He is the *Creator* (Job 33:4), He is *omnipresent* (Psalm 139:7) and He is *all-knowing* (1Cor. 2:11).

When a person is baptised with the Holy Spirit, they are not merely receiving spiritual “power”, they are receiving something from a *Person*.

Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they had received the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:6-8). Today, when a person gives

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their life to Christ this is because the Holy Spirit was already active in their life.

3. What do you think the Holy Spirit does in a person in order to bring them to Christ? (Note John 6:44 and 16:8)

4. What does the Holy Spirit do in a person once they accept Christ? (1Cor. 6:11)

It is just not possible to be a Christian without a work of the Holy Spirit taking place in your life! Upon surrendering to the Holy Spirit, He -

- ✿ **fills** your dead spirit (Rom. 8:9) and **quickens** it back to life (Eph. 2:1-5),
- ✿ **cleanses** your impure soul (Titus 3:5),
- ✿ **baptises** you into the body of Christ (1Cor. 12:13),
- ✿ **circumcises** our hard hearts (Rom. 2:29),
- ✿ causes us to abound in **hope** (Rom. 15:13),
- ✿ helps us to **understand** God (1Cor. 2:12),
- ✿ gives an appropriate **gift** to you (1Cor. 12:11),
- ✿ **places** you into a **church** community (Eph. 2:22),
- ✿ enables us to truly **worship** God (Phil. 3:3)
- ✿ is the One whom Christ **baptises** believers who seek with (Mat. 3:11; Luke 11:13; Acts 1:5; 11:16)

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While every believer has had a work of the Spirit in them in order to make them a born-again child of God, not all believers continue to be open to what the Holy Spirit wants to *further* do in their life.

5. Why do you think some believers are reluctant to allow the Holy Spirit to do more in their lives?

TONGUES

It appears from Scripture that there are two very distinct kinds of tongues. Firstly, there is *praying* in tongues ("speaking to God", 1Cor. 14:2) and then secondly, there is *prophesying* in tongues (also referred to as "speaking in tongues" 1Cor. 14:13, 27).

6. What did the Apostle Paul want for all believers according to First Corinthians 14:5?

It seems that when a believer prays in tongues they are praying mysteriously with the Holy Spirit's help.

7. According to Romans 8:26 how does the Holy Spirit help the believer to pray?

If you have not received the Baptism with the Holy Spirit consider making this point of prayer. If you have been seeking this Baptism with the Holy Spirit for some time, consider the following-

1. You may have already received it but not yet spoken in tongues. (If you suspect that this is where you are at, then proceed to 3.)

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2. You may have not been earnest and persistent seeking the Lord for this. (If you suspect that this is where you are at, proceed to 4.)
3. Consider that speaking in tongues as a prayer-language requires a step of faith since it is an unlearned language. Because in one probable instance, Scripture (Romans 8:26) refers to the sound of tongues as “groans” we can see that tongues will not always sound like a language to us. Therefore, the next time you are spending time with the Lord in prayer, let go, forget yourself, and allow the Holy Spirit to pray through you.
4. Keep seeking God for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and in the meantime be open to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

PRAYING AS LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT”

God has ordained that we pray. In a mysterious way, God has chosen to govern the world and intervene into the events of human lives in response to prayer! But it seems that God still guides *how, what, and who* we pray (for).

8. How does Ephesians 6:18 instruct us to pray? (Note Jude 20)

Praying in the Holy Spirit can mean praying in tongues, but it more likely means to pray as we sense the Holy Spirit prompting us. Have you ever felt to pray for someone, or for some situation? The Holy Spirit guides and directs His people to pray for other believers, certain souls to be saved, current events, family members and more. Have you ever felt this kind of leading of the Holy Spirit in prayer?

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PRAYER: Father, please fill me afresh with the Holy Spirit so that I am continually led by the Holy Spirit in prayer. Help me to feel what the Holy Spirit is saying to me. Help me to have a sensitive heart to the transforming and sanctifying work of the Spirit. Lord, when the Holy Spirit convicts me of those things in my life that are not pleasing to You, give me the grace to repent, surrender and comply. I want my life to be pleasing to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

PRAYING FOR THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

9. According to First Corinthians 14:1, what two things are believers to seek?

It takes prayer and then faith to step out in the gifts of the Spirit in a church service. Have you ever used a gift of the Spirit (mentioned in First Corinthians 12) in a church service? There are 9 gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in First Corinthians 12. We can not rule out that there may be other gifts that the Holy Spirit can gift believers with.

10. Which of the gifts does the Apostle Paul particularly want used in a church service according to First Corinthians 14?

Your homework for our next Bible study meeting is to do the following-

- 1. Write down the three most urgent needs of our church and present them to your Home Bible Study Group next meeting for prayer.*
 - 2. Settle your soul to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit each day in prayer. Note what the Holy Spirit led you to pray for and when He did so.*
 - 3. Pray for your Bible study group to give birth to another Bible Study Group.*
- Amen.*



PRAYER THAT WORKS

PRAYING THE SCRIPTURES

Study 4

Praying Scripture-

- Review last session's homework
- Prayerfully approaching Scripture
- Praying the prayers of Scripture
- Praying what we read
- Shaping the way you pray through Scripture

PRAYERFULLY APPROACHING SCRIPTURE

Which is most important to developing our spiritual growth as Christians- reading the Bible or praying? The answer is reading the Bible. But to do this effectively, it teaches us that it must be done *prayerfully*. One of the goals of daily reading God's Word and setting time aside to pray each day, is to be able to train our spiritual ears to hear God more clearly. Some Christians teach that hearing God is easy because when He talks it's unmistakable. But this type of thinking possibly commits the error of confusing *what God can do* with *what God actually does*. Of course God can speak to us in an unmistakable way. But the Scriptures reveal that God ordinarily speaks to His people very softly, gently, and quietly (note Job 26:14; 33:14). 'Quietly' does not mean *cryptically* though.

Praying The Scriptures

1. It's possible to read the Bible and miss what God is actually saying. Note how differently people heard things in John 12:28-29.

Reading God's Word helps us to become familiar with the *voice* of God. By reading God's Word we learn not only what God has said, but the language God uses when He speaks. By "language" I don't mean "English" or "Hebrew", rather, I mean the sorts of things that God is *likely* to say. When you get to know someone, you come to know *the way* they speak. You learn their favourite expressions, the things they value, and the way they use word-pictures ('metaphors').

From the Scriptures we see that God does indeed speak to people. It seems that He most often 'speaks' through - dreams, visions, or revelations.

2. Some claim that if God speaks, He will do it *audibly*. But how does Exodus 33:11 *not* support this idea?

Just as many of the Pharisees in the days of Jesus did not recognise the voice of God when Christ spoke, today there are many people who glance at God's Word and fail to hear God. If this is how you feel and you are sincerely reading God's Word with the intention of hearing from God, then there are some things that the Scriptures encourages us to pray regularly.

3. What do the Scriptures say is required for people to 'hear' what God is saying? (Matt. 11:15; Revelation 2:7)

Praying The Scriptures

In John 5:39 Jesus teaches His reluctant audience that just because they know what the Scriptures say does not mean that they could recognise God's voice.

5. What did Christ have to do for His followers in order for them to understand the Scriptures according to Luke 24:45?

6. What is the prayer of the Psalmist in Psalm 119:18 and how can we adapt this prayer for us today?

If you are struggling to daily read God's Word, ask God to help you and pray that you might delight in it. Then approach Scripture prayerfully by asking God to give you 'eyes' to see what His Word says, and to 'hear' what His Word says, and a 'mind' to understand it.

7. *Write your prayer here*

PRAYING THE PRAYERS OF SCRIPTURE

Most of the Psalms are prayers. Not all of them can be prayed by us though, because some of them are “*imprecatory*.” This big word means that the author of the Psalm is deeply upset and is venting his anger or frustration out in violent terms to God. This type of Psalm is not *endorsed* by God. But its inspired recording in Scripture shows that God understands human frustration. God is thus allowing the Psalmist to share his deepest feelings in prayer for the world to read.

But there are Psalms which cry out to God, and declare His greatness, offer Him complete surrender, and seek Him for provision. As we read through these types of Psalms we should consider whether we can use these Psalms to guide our own praying.

8. Consider Psalms 42 - 45. Is there anything in these Psalms which you could relate to and pray? Can you share which Psalm you could pray?

PRAYING WHAT WE READ

The Psalms are not the only prayers in Scripture. For example, the entire of Paul’s epistle to the Ephesians is actually a long prayer.

9. Have a glance at Ephesians and see if you can recognise the things that Paul is praying for them, which you could also pray for your church. Note four of these prayer points that your Bible Study Group has highlighted -

Praying The Scriptures

It's not just the prayers of Scripture that can be prayed. As you read the stories of the Bible consider pausing as you read and praying the positive lessons from the stories that you read. For example, you read how David refused to harm King Saul and you could pray that you could be forgiving and loyal even to those who may not care for you as they should, or even wish you ill. Or, you could be reading about Samson being enticed by Delilah and pray that God will keep you from yielding to temptation.

10. Can you think of a Bible passage that either has, or could, inspire a personal prayer from you?

11. What could you pray after reading Philippians 2:13-14?

SHAPING THE WAY YOU PRAY THROUGH SCRIPTURE

12. How might Psalm 40:8 shape the way you pray? (Consider also Psalm 143:10)

As we read the Biblical examples of those who mastered prayer, including Moses, David, Jesus, and Paul, we can be influenced by their examples. It is by becoming familiar with Scripture that we know how to pray more effectively.

Praying The Scriptures

13. What did Christ want His followers to especially know about prayer based on His comments in Luke 18:1?

14. According to Ephesians 3:20, how is God able to answer our prayers?

15. How should knowledge of Matthew 19:26 shape the way we pray? (Refer also to Matthew 6:8; 7:7; 18:19; 21:22)

There is a direct correlation to our knowledge of God's Word and the way we pray.

16. Consider Christ's words in John 15:7. What should be the relationship between our commitment to Scripture *and* prayer?

Your homework for our next Bible study meeting is to do the following-

1. Write down a prayer to share with your Bible Study Group the next time you meet that will sound outrageously hopeful of God doing the impossible for the good of those in your group.
2. Practice praying aloud with your family.
3. Begin to pray the prayers of Scriptures and come prepared to share with your group how this has changed the way you now pray.

Amen.



Study
5

Praying Publicly

- Review last lesson's homework
- What to pray for in public
- How to inspire people with your prayer
- Considered praying
- Ways not to pray in public

WHAT TO PRAY FOR IN PUBLIC"

Public praying is an important privilege. It can inspire or bore. Scripture records the public prayers of great leaders who were able to stir the hearts of their fellow countrymen and lead them into revival and victory. Like singing praise, public praying is not only talking to God it's also speaking to and for people (note Eph. 5:19). We will consider some of the great prayers of Scripture and see how these prayers can help us to pray better in public.

1. Read the public prayer of Moses in Deuteronomy 9:26-28. In what way is this prayer educational? In what way is it a challenge to this new generation of Israel?

Praying The Scriptures

Moses was a prophet. He prayed in the way a prophet prays. He prayed publicly in a way that reminded people of God's Word and challenged them to obey God.

When we pray in public we should be praying in a way that reminds those listening of what God's Word has said. We should also pray in a way that reminds people of God's glory and majesty, that is, His ability to help them get through whatever they are facing. Even when we bring before God a great problem or challenge in a public prayer, we are responsible to pray a prayer that will lift the faith of those joining in, not make them more depressed about our predicament!

2. Note what lessons for praying publicly can be learned from the prayer recorded in Acts 4:24-30?

When you pray publicly there are several very practical things you need to ensure.

1. Speak up!
2. Think beforehand what you are going to pray.
3. Don't mindlessly keep addressing your prayer to God (*"Oh God, Father, Lord, we, Oh God, Father, Lord Jesus, come to You Father, and we, Lord, oh God, acknowledge You, Father, Lord, God, Father, Amen"*).
4. Don't use prayer to spread gossip or hearsay (*"I know You know oh God, that sister Berticia has really been struggling of late and could sure do with a call from someone from our church Lord..."*).
5. Generally keep your public prayers short.

3. What do you notice about Christ's public prayer in John 11:41-42?

Praying The Scriptures

4. Based on Matthew 6:5, does it seem that Christ endorsed “public” praying?

It seems that Christ objected strongly to religious people praying in public in a way that attempted to impress others with how spiritual they were. Christ didn't condemn people praying in public, but he did condemn those prayed in public to big note themselves and try to impress others with how super-spiritual they were.

5. According to Mark 12:40, what did Christ find objectionable about the way these people prayed publicly?

Praying well in public takes practice. Practice praying aloud privately. When you pray out loud in a public setting, *don't feel you have to pray long prayers*. The goal of public praying is not length, but appropriateness.

HOW TO INSPIRE PEOPLE WITH YOUR PRAYER™

6. What inspires or motivates you?

Praying The Scriptures

7. The very first thing you must do to lead people in inspirational praying is to pray with-

() Lots of information () Lots of groaning () Lots of passion!

A *passionate* person is an *interesting* person. Pray passionately in public! This doesn't mean you have to shout, yell, rant, or rave, but it does mean that you should pray in a way that conveys a sense of *urgency*, a great *reverence* for the One to whom you are praying, and an obvious *interest* in what you are praying for.

8. Based on some of the things that we have looked at so far regarding Public praying, read the prayer of Hezekiah in Second Kings 19:15-19, and note what made this an inspiring public prayer.

CONSIDERED PRAYING™



When you know that you are going to have to pray in public, perhaps at an official or formal event, you would do well to listen well to what is happening and pray accordingly. Listen for people's names. Listen for hopes and dreams. Note the actual occasion and its purpose. Have you been doing this tonight?

Example: I was asked to close in prayer at the Launceston Christian School end of year presentations a few years ago. Fortunately I was given a couple days notice which meant that I was able to attend the presentations with a pen, notepad, and a keen ear. By the time the presentations were over I had a list of things which I could pray for which sounded like I had been paying close attention throughout the night.

Praying The Scriptures

9. You might be at a family function where you are asked to say grace for the meal. You have several non-Christians at this meal. What might you pray?

Of course the idea of praying “considered prayers” also applies to praying with another person who may have just asked you to pray for them. Have you heard things here that you could pray about for your Bible study group at the end of this time together?

WHAT NOT TO PRAY FOR IN PUBLIC”

10. Read First Timothy 2:1-6 and note what Paul taught should be prayed for in public-



Using a public prayer to mock or criticise another person is not only poor form and a display of unchastened character, it is entirely inappropriate. Praying avariciously (greedily, note James 4:3) is to be avoided generally, but especially when praying in public. For example, praying in public for your sporting team

to win is completely out of order, while praying that they might *play well* and be kept safe is in order.

11. Some people believe that praying prayers which tell God what to do is “faith”. But how does Matthew 6:10 seem to urge a different type of praying?

Thus, when praying in public for a terminally ill person it is inappropriate to tell God He *must* heal this person.

Praying The Scriptures

12. Instead, how might we pray in public for a terminally ill person?



Your homework for our next Bible study meeting is to do the following-

1. Attend a prayer meeting and pray publicly with a considered prayer.
2. Read the Model Prayer given by Christ in Matthew 6:9-13 and consider how this prayer should be prayed today.
3. Pray out loud with another person in a way that shows you have really heard them.

Amen.