



## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 1 – Authentic Prayer

Jesus was a praying man. His disciples saw this about their teacher right away. He prayed every morning, often before the sun came up. They saw His habit of slipping away at the end of a long day for time alone with His Father. They heard Him pray and witnessed the power and peace that He carried into every aspect of His life and ministry. So, they asked Jesus to teach them to pray.

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover how (and how not) to pray.
- Consider what experiencing God's presence in daily life is intended to be.
- Examine how God speaks to us through His Word.
- Pray unhurried prayers that are rooted in knowing and living in God's Word.

#### Ice Breaker

What is the first prayer you were taught to say? Who taught you?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:5–13** and **Luke 18:9–14** to get the overall idea. Follow the dialogue closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two — The Power of a Simple Prayer

### Read Matthew 6:5–13

Jesus gave the disciples more than a pattern of words to pray. In six phrases, this prayer shows us what experiencing God's presence in daily life is intended to be.

1. So, are you ready to discover how to experience the power of God's presence in six short phrases? Let's get going! But wait—this isn't a race. Not a sprint, anyway. We run a Hebrews 12:1–2 race where endurance is tantamount to winning. The pace is set by keeping our eyes on Jesus. We don't have to run fast, we just need to stay close and keep in step with Him.

The Lord's Prayer is short and easy to recite, but actually praying it cannot be hurried. We are used to *fast*—with a side of *while we're at it* thrown in, because that's the pace of this world we live in. Truth be told, being quiet and focused on just one thing for more than five uninterrupted minutes is getting harder to do.

- a. Jesus regularly removed Himself from busyness to pray. If Jesus needed to get away from distractions to pray, what does that say for us? If you could have five uninterrupted minutes with Jesus three times a day, how would you spend them? (No really, think about it and write something down.)

- b. From what you know about Jesus' earthly ministry, describe what a typical day's routine might have been for Him.

2. To understand what prayer is, let's be clear on what it is not. Even people who claim no particular faith in God may adopt prayer as a healthy practice for mental and emotional well-being. But prayer is not tapping into some energy we stir up in ourselves.

Prayer is conversing with God, and good conversation involves listening as well as speaking. God speaks first through His Word and authentic prayer is rooted in knowing and responding to God's Word. Put another way, "Without prayer that answers the God of the Bible, we will only be talking to ourselves."<sup>1</sup> Briefly note what will *always* be true of God speaking to us.

Psalms 119:105

Proverbs 8:32–34

2 Timothy 3:16

Hebrews 4:16

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, pg. 62

3. Now think of God's promises that are attached to prayer. Here are a few to get you started.

Matthew 7:7

John 15:7

1 John 5:14–15

James 1:5

Jeremiah 29:12–13

Psalms 91:15

Isaiah 65:24

Psalms 34:17

Is there one promise in particular that resonates with you today? Briefly share why.

### **Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

Matthew 6:8 ESV

### ***Think it over . . .***

What are three qualities about your Heavenly Father that settle your cares and concerns?

### Day Three – Pray-Acting and Empty Words

#### Read Matthew 6:5–8 and Luke 18:9–14

Jesus began by telling the disciples how *not* to pray.

1. Jesus warned the disciples not to treat prayer like a performance in order to impress others or feel good about themselves. The problem wasn't when or where they prayed, but why they prayed.
  - a. Devout Jews observed public prayers three times a day, at 9:00 AM, noon, and 3:00 PM. If they couldn't be at the synagogue, they would stop and pray wherever they were. The men in Jesus' illustration made sure everyone knew how devout they were. The point Jesus made was that, if we only pray when others can see and hear us, we're missing the point! Why is it essential for us to get alone with the Lord to pray?
  - b. When believers pray together, in what ways might we be inclined to impress others or compare how we pray with someone else's prayer?
2. Jesus had more to say about hypocritical prayers. When pray-acting is used to draw attention to oneself, it's annoying. But what was the self-centered Pharisee in Luke 18:9–14 doing?
  - a. If we were in church with these men, what might we see? One, a regular church-going, tithe-paying, morally upright man. The other, a guy who sees the mess he's made of his life, asking God for a clean heart and a fresh start. Both are in church and both have reasons to be thankful. But which prayer does God accept? Why?
  - b. Jesus said the humble man went home justified. The other man went home with a log in his eye (Matthew 7:5). We might think, *he wasn't even a Christian*. Do we know that? This much we know; we don't want to be that man. As C.S. Lewis put it, "When we Christians behave badly, or fail to behave well, we are making Christianity unbelievable to the world."

As representatives of the gospel, what lends credence to our message?

John 13:34–35

3. Jesus cautioned the disciples not to use vain repetitions like those who pray to false gods. When the apostle Paul visited Athens, the philosophers wanted to hear what new techniques he might have to offer (Acts 17:18). They never knew which god might listen, so prayer was a ritual of calling out each god by name and reciting elaborate incantations.
  - a. Why did Jesus downplay using the same words and phrases repeatedly when we pray?
  - b. What did Jesus *not* mean when He said, “Pray then like this...” (Matthew 6:9 ESV).
4. Jesus gave the disciples simple guidelines on how *not* to pray. These may be some of the same hurdles that we need to clear. There may be other hurdles that come to mind for you.
  - a. In what ways do we tend to make prayer more complicated?
  - b. In what ways can these guidelines help to keep your own prayers simple and focused?
5. Authentic prayer means: (Check all that apply.)
  - a. Pray with a listening heart (Ecclesiastes 5:2). \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Pray with a humble heart (2 Chronicles 7:14). \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Pray with an undivided heart (Jeremiah 29:13). \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Pray with a faithful heart (Mark 11:22–24). \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Pray with an obedient heart (1 John 3:22). \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Add your own thought to the list: \_\_\_\_\_

### Memory Verse

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.  
Matthew 6:8 ESV

### *Think it over . . .*

Is there a particular prayer habit you need to break? Why or why not?

## Day Four – Ask, Seek, Knock ... and Run?

### Read Matthew 7:7–11

Jesus talks about the generosity of persistent prayer.

When Jesus said, “Look! I stand at the door and knock,” (Revelation 3:20 NLT) He was speaking to a church that had gotten complacent in their relationship with Him. They were good at doing good things, but Jesus could see what they needed was a meal of fellowship...conversation... and communion with Him.

Some mornings we rush out the door, no time for coffee with Jesus. We grab a verse off our phone and wash it down with an inspirational quote. It isn't a meal, and it's not a sustainable spiritual diet—but some mornings it's the best we can manage. Surely better than nothing, but not ideal. Jesus understands *busy*. He didn't always have time for a meal and the crowds didn't go home after five. But He was in step with the Spirit and He knew how to keep *busy* from crowding out *best*. Surely, this is one reason the disciples asked Him to teach them to pray.

1. Having God's Word committed to memory is more than a good idea—it's a lifeline for us in the busy days. It will be “a strong refuge we can resort to continually...and my mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day...” (Psalm 71:3, 15).

Share a few favorite verses you've committed to memory that you can *resort to continually* throughout the day.

2. But in Matthew 7:7–11, Jesus turned the illustration and we are the ones who are at the door, asking, seeking, and knocking. As you read this familiar passage, what does it teach us about prayer?
  - a. In the Lord's pattern for prayer, Jesus said don't be repetitious in saying your prayers. Does that mean we shouldn't repeat our prayers? Explain the difference.

### Memory Verse

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.  
Matthew 6:8 ESV

### Think it over . . .

What is the most common name you use to address God when you pray? Why?

## Day Five – The Things We Need

1. Did you know that worship and prayer is an aroma that God finds irresistible? In the Bible, incense is a symbol of prayer. Every morning and every evening, Aaron the priest would burn aromatic incense on the altar so that there would be “perpetual incense before the Lord” (Exodus 30:8). God Himself gave the formula for this sweet-smelling savor. We even get a glimpse of earthly prayers from Heaven’s perspective. The prayers of God’s people, mixed with incense, rising before God’s throne (Revelation 8:3–4).

- a. Instead of vain repetitions and much words, what did David want his prayers to be? Psalm 141:2

- b. Prayer has a way of refining our heart. We learn to pray, not just for right things but also for the right reasons. What do you want your prayers to be?

**“After being with Jesus,  
half the questions that  
trouble you will be  
answered  
and the other half will not  
seem worth the asking.**

**You are His beloved  
and your heart can rest  
in that fact.”**

**C.H. Spurgeon  
“The Christ-Given Rest”**

### Memory Verse

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.  
Matthew 6:8 ESV

### Think it over . . .

Elisabeth Elliott said, “Never dig up in fear what you have already planted in faith.” Is there any replanting to be done today?

### After His Heart

“The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.” —2 Chronicles 16:9 NLT

**“God found in  
David a man who  
would stand in  
the gap, a man  
whose heart was  
fully committed to  
Him. Will He find  
that in you?”**

**Greg Laurie**

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

### Prayer Requests

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 2 – Our Father

For John Mahony, a retired U.S. Army colonel, instinct kicked in first on the morning of September 11, 2001. The building jerked hard. “Earthquake,” said his California instinct. Mahony led his co-workers from the 19th floor, North Tower, to stairs filled with smoke and stunned evacuees. Fire sprinklers turned stairwells into waterfalls. Firefighters rushed up as frightened civilians stumbled down. Out of chaos, a familiar rhythm surfaced. His daily habit of saying the Lord’s Prayer settled his mind as the building writhed.

“At first I couldn’t get past the first part. Thy will be done. Thy will be done. But then it came and with it, peace. Jesus was right there with me, with all of us.” Despite the horror of that day, “I walked away with two priceless gifts—God’s peace with me every day, and the unshakeable power of a simple prayer.”

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover why there is power in this ancient prayer.
- Consider how the attributes of God instill confidence in our Father.
- Examine ways to develop and strengthen personal prayer habits.
- Pray honest prayers that expand understanding and hold steady with gratitude.

#### Ice Breaker

What is your favorite name for addressing God?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:9–13** and **Galatians 4:4–7** to get the overall idea. Follow the dialogue closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God’s ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Who Is Like Our God?

Jesus taught us to begin our prayer with worship, adoration, and praise. Remember how King David sat before the Lord and prayed, “Who am I, O Lord God...that You have brought me this far? For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears” (2 Samuel 7:18, 22 NKJV). Giving thought to who God is will give us every reason to echo David’s same prayer.

It’s a healthy and humbling experience to contemplate who God is—but it’s a lot like trying to drink Niagara Falls with a teacup! While God is too big for our minds to fully comprehend, He is near and wants to be known.

1. God’s attributes are essential qualities that are His alone. Meditating on these attributes strengthens our faith, and stirs awe and confidence in our Heavenly Father.

Give yourself time to read these verses. You don’t need to write them here, word for word, but make a note to help you remember what it says and how you might pray it back to God.

- a. **God is eternal.** As believers, we will live forever (immortality), but only God is eternal. We are created beings, but there has never been a time when God did not exist.

Exodus 3:14

Deuteronomy 33:27

Psalms 90:2

- b. **God is unchangeable.** God is immutable, which is to say He does not change. He has no need to grow or develop in character. He will not degenerate or cease to be perfect.

Psalms 102:25–27

Malachi 3:6a

James 1:17

- c. **God is all-knowing.** God is omniscient, which is to say He has complete and perfect knowledge. God is fully aware of all things at all times and has unlimited understanding.

Job 34:21

Psalms 139:1–6

Hebrews 4:13

- d. **God is ever-present.** God is omnipresent, which is to say He is present everywhere. At the same time, God is not limited by time and space. He exists outside of time and space.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Proverbs 15:3

Jeremiah 23:24

- e. **God is all-powerful.** God is omnipotent, which is to say that He has unlimited strength and the ability to accomplish all that He desires.

Job 42:2

Psalms 115:3

Jeremiah 32:27

2. When we settle our thoughts and worship God for *who He is* at the start of our prayer, what effect will it have on everything else that follows?

### **Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

For us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him;  
and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist for Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6 NASB

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### **Think it over**

What is the difference between “*from*” whom and “*by*” whom?

### Day Three – A Family Prayer

Read **Galatians 4:4–7** and **Romans 8:14–16**

The Lord's Prayer is a *family* prayer, but it's not for everyone. In one sense, we are all God's children because He created human beings. But the only way to become *family* with God is through faith in Jesus Christ.

1. We are so accustomed to this prayer that we can pass right over "Our Father" and not even notice the gospel in it!

- a. Our **Father**. Prior to this, the name used most often was Yahweh (Lord) and it was so revered that, once written, it could not be erased. No devout Jew would presume to call God his own Father. How did Jesus make it possible for us to say Abba, Father?

John 1:12

Galatians 4:4–7

Romans 8:14–16

- b. **Our Father**. No Christian is an only child. We are family, not a loosely knit organization. The Lord taught us to pray *our* Father to remind us that prayer is not, (even when we're alone in the *secret place* Jesus spoke of), an all-about-me activity. Why is that good news?

Acts 1:14 and 2:42

Ephesians 6:18–19

Philippians 2:1–4

Colossians 1:9–12

2. What are some practical ways for us to pray with, and for, other Christians?

- a. Do you participate in praying with other believers on a regular basis? Would you like to? In what way?
  - b. What would you say is the greatest benefit you have experienced from praying with, and for, others?

**"God does not expect us to maintain the life of prayer in our own strength.**

**Jesus knows how weak we are. Therefore, when He teaches us to pray, He invites us into fellowship.**

**To pray is to practice the communion of the saints, which is the spiritual fellowship all Christians everywhere enjoy in Jesus Christ."**

Philip Graham Ryken

*When You Pray:*

*Making the Lord's Prayer Your Own*

## Memory Verse

For us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him;  
and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist for Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6 NASB

## Think it over . . .

If I was more intentional about existing for God the Father each day, what would be different?

## Day Four – A Good, Good Father

### Ephesians 3:14–18 NLT

“When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit. Then Christ will make His home in your hearts as you trust in Him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, how deep His love is.”

1. The apostle Paul knew how to pray big prayers! Wouldn’t you like someone to pray this for you? Well in fact, he did! (By the way, we can pray this for others too.) This prayer is for those who have been adopted into the family of God.

Paul asks the Spirit to give us power to *understand* the love of God. The word *understand* means to jump on and wrestle to the ground. It reminds us of what nearly every child in every generation is compelled to do when they see their dad or grandpa laid out relaxing on the floor—jump ‘em! The idea here is, never outgrow the delight of tumbling around with how and why you were adopted into God’s family (aka *the joy of your salvation*). Here are the highlights; you fill in the details:

- a. Christ redeemed you (Galatians 3:13, Matthew 27:46). What did that cost Him?
- b. The Spirit of His Son confirmed it—welcome to the family (Galatians 4:6, Romans 8:16). Wow, what was that like for you?
- c. Your inheritance (Ephesians 1:1–14). Does that read like small print on a contract? No worries—just keep checking back, it’ll hit you.
- d. All-access pass (Ephesians 2:18). What’ll you do with that?
- e. New name, new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17). How’s that going?

- f. Bonus! Jesus has plans and He's praying for you (John 17:1–26). Just read and say thanks!

### **Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer**

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

### **Memory Verse**

For us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him;  
and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist for Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6 NASB

### **And When You Pray ...**

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

**“Prayer is not just  
getting God to move.**

**It’s the process  
through which God  
moves and changes us.**

**Prayer will not only  
transform what you  
pray about; it will  
transform you.”**

**Greg Laurie**

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 3 – Our Father in Heaven

“Who wants to go to Heaven?” the Sunday school teacher asked. All the boys and girls shot hands into the air. Except for Billy. He slid down in his chair and let out a sigh. “Billy,” the teacher gently asked, “wouldn’t you like to go to Heaven?” “Well...I *guess* so. But my mom said we could go to Disneyland after church. I really don’t want to miss that.”

Many people think like Billy. Heaven is up there, somewhere, someday. But we’re busy living, and Heaven? Truth be told, it feels like an interruption. It isn’t on our to-do list for today. Why not? When Heaven fills our thoughts, it’s more than a destination. It’s a motivation.

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover a glimpse of what Heaven will be like.
- Consider why being heavenly-minded is of great earthly good.
- Examine how Heaven is a destination *and* a motivation.
- Pray honest prayers that value eternal things more than earthly things.

#### Ice Breaker

What are some common misperceptions people have about Heaven?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:9–13**, **Colossians 3:1–2**, and **Revelation 22:1–5** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God’s ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Think Heaven

### Read Colossians 3:1–2

“Our Father in Heaven ...” When we fix our hearts and minds on things above, we begin to see how heavenly-mindedness shapes us for earthly good.

1. We can take comfort in praying, “our Father” because God is always accessible and actively engaged in our daily life. “He is not far from any one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:27–28 NIV). At the same time, God is so *transcendent* (beyond us) that even the heavens cannot contain Him (1 Kings 8:27).

How do these two truths about God factor in to the way that we think, live, and pray to our Father in Heaven? Briefly share your thoughts and then note some of David’s thoughts on the matter.

Psalm 8:3–5

Psalm 103:11–19

Psalm 139:1–12

- a. Do you believe that your Father in Heaven is listening, working, and looking after you? How does knowing this help you in the circumstances you face today?
2. How often do you think about Heaven? For most of us, except for seasons of grief or the realities of aging, Heaven doesn’t usually occupy our thoughts. But Colossians 3:1–2 instructs us to *keep seeking* (diligently, actively, single-mindedly) the things that are above and set your heart on Heaven. Share what that means for you in practical, everyday terms.
  - a. Does being heavenly-minded influence your daily choices and short-term goals? In what way?
  - b. Think of one or two specific things (e.g., a long-term goal, pursuit, relationship) that your heart and mind is set on. What helps you to keep it in proper perspective?

What is likely to hinder you?

3. **Seek and Set.** Paul used two words to state and re-state this command. *“Keep seeking”* describes a **mind-set**. *“Set”* describes a **heart-motive**. Are we splitting hairs, or is there a point? Well, Paul had just finished dismantling a cage that some rule-makers were trying to trap the Colossians in. “Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that comes from human thinking” (Colossians 2:8 NLT).

He reminded them to let their roots grow down and grow strong in the truth. Heaven was theirs because of faith in Jesus, not a bunch of powerless rules. They sound wise but they have absolutely no power to change you from the inside out. *You’re free to get on with your life in Christ.*

So . . . don’t live like you used to, don’t give in to all the dirty laundry behaviors you’ve left lying around in your heart (Colossians 3:5–9). Put them off—that’s the old you. Does it sound like Paul just gave them another set of impossibly difficult rules to follow? Not at all. He was giving them—and us—something much better to live for.

Consider again what it means to *keep seeking* and *set* our mind on Heaven. How does being heavenly-minded shape us for earthly good? Briefly share your thoughts.

- a. Let thoughts of Heaven fuel your mind to action.

**“Let me offer a fresh way to look at these all-too-human struggles. You don’t need to *turn away* from one thing as much as you need to *turn to* another. What do you do when you want a child to let go of something? You put something better and more interesting in front of him—he will let go in a hurry to reach for that new something. You and I need something more important to us than the earthly attractions that keep tripping us up. A new affection that causes that old thing to be seen for what it is, and I don’t want it anymore. What is the new affection? Heaven.”**

Pastor Greg Laurie  
*Essentials*

- b. Give your heart to heavenly things, not to the passing things of earth.

**Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1 ESV

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**Think it over . . .**

What does the metaphor of a tent and a building teach you about your life?

**Day Three – Breaking Camp****Read 2 Corinthians 5:1–7**

“Our Father in Heaven ...” The Bible promises that our resurrected bodies will be a new and improved, clearly unmistakable version of us.

1. As you read 2 Corinthians 5:1–7, give some thought to...
  - a. What is Paul most comforted by?
  - b. What is Paul most confident of?
  - c. What part, if any, do you find most difficult to wrap your head around?
  - d. Share one takeaway truth and why it ministers to you.

2. If you needed to explain to someone, who didn't know what having a resurrected body will be like, could you do it? (Without asking Pastor Greg or reading any other book but the Bible.) Note something from each of these verses—then choose one to explain in a little more detail.

Please note: This is not a test and you will not be graded!

Job 19:25–27

1 Corinthians 15:42–44

Philippians 3:20–21

1 John 3:2

3. In one of his last recorded prayers, King David said, “We are here for only a moment, visitors and strangers in the land as our ancestors were before us. Our days on earth are like a passing shadow, gone so soon without a trace” (1 Chronicles 29:15 NLT).

And we all say ... amen. It's been wisely said that we cannot add years to our life, but we can add life to our years. Some take up that challenge and go after their bucket list. Others have been consistently building a legacy.

What do you want your spiritual legacy to be? What is on your *spiritual* bucket list?

### **Memory Verse**

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1 ESV

### ***Think it over . . .***

What do you most look forward to about your resurrected body?

## Day Four – Someday ... Heaven!

### Read Revelation 22:1–5

“Our Father in Heaven...” Someday we will see Him face to face, but until then, we can see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 27:13).

1. Revelation 22:1–5 gives us an amazing glimpse of Heaven. Take your time reading these verses...there’s no hurry. We won’t cross-reference or look for deep meanings. Just read it as many times as you like and note what seems the same—and different—in heaven about:
  - a. Water
  - b. Street
  - c. Tree
  - d. Leaves
  - e. Fruit
  - f. People
  - g. Night
  - h. Light
2. When Moses said, “Please show me Your glory,” the Lord answered, “...you cannot see My face, for man shall not see Me and live” (Exodus 33:18, 20 ESV). So, it’s astounding to be told that in Heaven, we will see God’s face. Do we have to wait until Heaven to see God’s face and live?

In Western culture, when we speak to someone we look them in the face—not at their shoes, or beyond their shoulder to the wall behind them—to have meaningful communication.

When someone gives little or no eye contact during conversation it’s a sign of disinterest or distraction. From an early age, we teach our children to look at a person when they are being spoken to, as a sign of respect. In Middle Eastern cultures, strong eye contact *between men* is a sign of honesty and sincerity, a nonverbal way of saying *believe me when I say...*

God invites us to seek His face *today* and listen intently and believe (apply) what He says.

2 Chronicles 7:14–15

Psalm 27:4, 8, 13–14

Matthew 5:8

John 14:19–21

2 Corinthians 4:6

## Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

### Memory Verse

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1 ESV

### And When You Pray ...

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

“Prayer is not just getting God to move. It’s the process through which God moves and changes us.

Prayer will not only transform what you pray about; it will transform you.”

Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 4 – Holy Is Your Name

Remember getting your first driver's license? It's a big day, but the car exam can be tense. One teenager almost had a perfect score on his test. "You did fine, only one mistake," the examiner said as he got out of the car. The boy sighed in relief, "I'm glad I don't have to drive that careful all the time!" That's how some Christians view holiness. On their best behavior at church but not that different from the world the rest of the time.

Jesus taught us to pray, "holy is Your name." Set apart, to honor His name and live a holy life.

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover the holiness of God's name.
- Consider why Jesus taught us to begin our prayers this way.
- Examine what God's names reveal about Him.
- Pray honest prayers that begin and end with worship.

#### Ice Breaker

In what ways is holiness viewed as an outdated concept for some people, even in the church?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:9–13**, **Isaiah 6:1–8**, and **John 17:1–6** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Holy, Holy, Holy

### Read Isaiah 6:1–8

To say “hallowed be Your name” does not mean we are praying for God’s name to be made holy. God’s name *is* holy. We are praying for God’s holy, refining presence to work in us to honor Him.

1. What does a name represent? In business, we think in terms of a brand. The name defines the product, the service, the identity. Having a good name is synonymous with recognition, influence, and success. In personal terms, we think of reputation—character and the qualities that make us essentially who we are.
2.
  - a. God’s name expresses and reflects His divine nature. He is who He is. When you think of God’s name and nature, what comes to mind? How would you describe God?
  - b. Why do you think Jesus taught us to begin our prayers by hallowing God’s name?
3. Have you ever prayed to feel the Lord’s presence? Like a song, we welcome God’s Spirit to come fill the atmosphere and let us experience the glory of His goodness. When it comes from a true heart, it’s music to God’s ears. It’s the prayer He will answer. Consider how the Lord did this for Isaiah.
  - a. What did Isaiah see and hear and feel? Is this different from what we usually have in mind when we picture coming into God’s presence? In what way?
  - b. What did Isaiah realize and confess about himself? Why will this always be a consistent part of truly experiencing God’s presence? Do you welcome it? Why or why not?
  - c. “I am undone” is a response God will always hear and accept. “It’s no big deal” is *never* acceptable. Isaiah’s vision changed his understanding of God’s holy response to sin and it can change ours. In what way?

Isaiah 8:13

Isaiah 59:1–2

Isaiah 57:15–16

4. When God wants to use a man or woman, He lets them feel deeply their need for Him, and then He will light a fire in them. God chose Isaiah to call his generation back to holiness. But first, Isaiah needed a personal experience of God's mercy and forgiveness that would give him purpose and stir him to say, "Here am I, send me."

- a. "In the year that King Uzziah died." This was an unsettling event for the nation, and Isaiah in particular. His earthly king turned out to be a hero with feet of clay. Now he was gone. Judah was in a deep moral slide, too corrupt to change and too comfortable to care. How disheartening. Isaiah had nothing but woe and judgment to proclaim to his people. Until he saw the Lord. How did Isaiah's encounter with the Lord change what mattered to him?

Can you identify with Isaiah? In what way?

- b. King Uzziah's attempt to barge into God's presence on his own terms ended badly. What had he failed to understand about God? What do we learn from him?

Uzziah was king of Judah for 52 years. He did right in the Lord's sight and God blessed him. Everything he touched prospered. The nation was strong and stable during his reign. But pride was his undoing (2 Chronicles 26:16).

Uzziah felt entitled to take the priest's place, in direct violation of God's holiness. Instead of repenting when he was confronted, he got angry and defiant. Uzziah took the censer and went to the altar, where he was immediately struck with leprosy. Sadly, Uzziah spent his last years in isolation, a leper until the day he died.

5. Like live coals from the altar, it will hurt at some level to experience holiness. God is a refining fire, intent on making us holy (Malachi 3:2–3). Our holy life began with salvation—not by any doing of ours, but by what Jesus our Savior did for us (Titus 3:4–7). From that moment until our last breath, we are being sanctified, set apart for God's purposes and glory.

Job 23:10

1 Peter 1:6–7

When, and in what way, are you most aware of God's refining fire?

### Memory Verse

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods?

Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?

Exodus 15:11 ESV

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**Think it over . . .** What will you praise God for today?

## Day Three – Holiness Is Christ in Me

### Read John 17:3–5, 17–19

What is the most effective way to honor God’s name as holy? By being holy. This John 17 prayer (the real Lord’s prayer) is what Jesus prayed for us. In this session, we look at a few key verses, but read the entire prayer for yourself. It is time well spent.

Everything that Jesus came to do is compressed into a few words (John 17:3–5). In those few simple verses, we see all eternity in the planning, accomplished in thirty-three years, so that we can live forever. Think about it.

- a. What is eternal life?
  - b. Why did Jesus come?
  - c. Where is He now?
2. Jesus prayed for us to be holy (John 17:17–19). Holiness is not an optional, deluxe version of salvation. If Jesus died to make us holy, then holy we must be. Consider what that means.
    - a. Can we identify holiness when we see it? What does it look like to you?
    - b. Some associate holiness with being austere and rigid. Does that describe Jesus? What was it about Jesus that attracted people to Him?
  3. Holiness is the most important thing about us because it gives weight to our words and life with others. It’s our voice, even when we don’t speak, to draw people to want to know God. Briefly note what holiness “looks like” in normal, everyday life.

Matthew 5:14–16

Romans 12:1–2

1 Peter 3:15–16

**“What do your children,  
your family, your friends,  
need most from you?  
Your personal holiness.**

**Whatever else you think  
is more important than  
holiness . . . isn’t.”**

Timothy Keller

Think of someone who was instrumental in bringing you to Jesus. Share how their life and witness influenced you.

4. "Hallowed be Your name" means: (Check all that apply.)
- a. It's simply a polite and respectful way to start your prayer. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Worship and adoration of God for who He is and what He does. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. An expression of devotion, "You are first in my heart and in my life." \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. An expressed pledge to represent God in our actions and attitudes. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. A petition that more people would come to know God and honor His name. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Add your own thought. \_\_\_\_\_

### Memory Verse

Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods?  
Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?  
Exodus 15:11 ESV

### *Think it over . . .*

How have you seen God at work in the lives of your family and friends? What will you pray for them today?

### Day Four – What's in a Name?

#### **Psalm 9:10**

Those who know Your name will put their trust in You.

God's name is glorified and our faith is made strong when we pray, knowing God's character and His ways. Some of God's names are listed for you here, with space between for you to record your own thoughts and response.

1. **Yahweh** (Jehovah) – I AM (Genesis 2:4, Exodus 3:14). With this name, God reveals that He is self-existent. No beginning, no end. All of God's names stem from His works except this one. This is the name that fully expresses God's being.
2. **Elohim** – Creator (Genesis 1:1). This is the name that reveals God to us at the beginning of time. Not His beginning, for Elohim has always existed and time is part of His creation. God wasn't just hovering out in space—He created space too. God transcends time, space, and matter. Elohim is a *plural* name, indicating the triune nature of God.

3. **El-Shaddai** – God Almighty (Genesis 17:1). The Lord used this name when He made the covenant with Abraham. It expresses God’s unlimited power and unfailing faithfulness. Nothing is too hard for God and He always keeps His promises.
4. **Adonai** – My Lord (Genesis 15:2, 2 Samuel 7:18). This name recognizes God’s rule and divine ownership. He is Lord of all and takes loving responsibility for the care and wellbeing of His servants and His creation.
5. **Jehovah-Jireh** – The Lord our Provider (Genesis 22:14). We’re familiar with Abraham’s test of obedience and how the Lord blessed him for holding nothing back. God saw and God provided.
6. **Jehovah-Tsaba** – The Lord our Warrior (1 Samuel 17:45). This is the name that David invoked when he fought Goliath. Perspective is everything. David saw Goliath’s size but his focus was on the King of the universe, mighty in power. David habitually kept a sense of awe for God and His glory, and that cut his enemy down to size.
7. **Jehovah-Rapha** – The Lord our Healer (Exodus 15:25–26). This name refers to God’s healing of infirmities of body, mind, and spirit. The Israelite’s situation at Marah points to an important truth that God not only heals but also has a purpose for our pain and problems.

### Memory Verse

Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods?  
Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?  
Exodus 15:11 ESV

### *Think it over . . .*

Which of God’s names puts your current circumstances into perspective? What will you trust Him to do with you, for you, through you?

## Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanks giving ...

S upplication ...

### Memory Verse

Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods?  
Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?  
Exodus 15:11 ESV

### And When You Pray ...

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

**“Prayer is not just  
getting God to move.  
It’s the process  
through which God  
moves and changes us.**

**Prayer will not only  
transform what you  
pray about; it will  
transform you.”**

**Greg Laurie**

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 5 – Your Kingdom Come

On June 6, 1944, the Allied Forces invaded German troops on the coast of Normandy, France. The D-Day invasion signaled the beginning of the end of World War II. There were more battles to be fought, but Hitler's defeat was sealed. Victory would come and Europe would be liberated.

When Jesus went to the cross, it was D-Day for the kingdom of God. Sin and death were defeated and the devil now fights a losing battle. We live in the *"now"* of Christ's reign in our lives and look forward to the *"not yet,"* when Jesus returns to establish His kingdom on earth. In the meantime, there are battles to fight and captives to be set free.

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover how to live and look forward to the Lord's return.
- Consider the ways we can be salt and light in today's culture.
- Examine who and what we live for.
- Pray honest prayers to spread good news and hold steady with hope.

#### Ice Breaker

Can you think of a recent answer to prayer that took you completely by surprise?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 5:1–12** and **Luke 8:4–15** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Your Kingdom Come, My Kingdom Go

### Read Matthew 5:1–12.

When we pray, “Your kingdom come,” we are praying for God to reign in us, here and now, as we live and look forward to the day when Jesus returns.

1. In Luke’s account of the Beatitudes, Jesus contrasts the blessings of living for God’s kingdom with the sorrows of living only for this world (see Luke 6:24–26). It’s as though Jesus is asking, what do you most want out of life? Woe—*alas, how sad for you*—if this is what you make your life about. Are these the same things that people live for today? In what way?

2. What does following Jesus mean for every individual, whatever our ordinary life and daily routine may be?

Matthew 16:24–25

John 14:21

John 15:16

1 Corinthians 6:19–20

**You can’t pray, “Your kingdom come”  
until you are prepared to pray,  
“My kingdom go.”**

**Are you willing to do that?  
Until we give God permission to  
supplant or even dismantle our  
personal kingdom—  
our own wants, desires,  
priorities, plans, and goals—  
we can’t really pray  
“Your kingdom come”  
with any integrity.**

Pastor Greg Laurie  
*Essentials*

3. The “be” attitudes are not a list of commands—they are a description of Christ-follower traits, a standard of conduct. When we live these out, we are a visible demonstration of an otherwise invisible (to unbelievers) grace that we live in *and oftentimes take for granted*.

As you go through this list, keep in mind these aren’t like spiritual gifts, where the Spirit chooses to give each one of us some but not others. These are the standard for every citizen in God’s kingdom. But you *will* see the *fruit* of the Spirit at work.

Read each “be” attitude and answer these questions: How is this different from the world’s standard practice? How does it make *me* different? What fruits of the Spirit are evident? (See Galatians 5:22–23.)

- a. Poor in spirit – Matthew 5:3. We are utterly destitute of any claim to goodness within ourselves. As the old hymn goes, “Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to the cross I cling.”
- b. Those who mourn – Matthew 5:4. Jesus used the strongest word for *mourn* here. Grief that strips and stuns to the core of your soul. We mourn for all kinds of reasons: loss, regrets, circumstances, sins. God is our unfailing source of consolation (Psalm 94:19).

- c. Meek – Matthew 5:5. A forbearing spirit; strength under control. The proper balance between anger and indifference. Strong enough to suffer wrong without bitterness or desire for revenge.
- d. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness – Matthew 5:6. Jesus chose words that mean *famished* and *insatiable thirst* for the desire to be in a right relationship with God.
- e. Merciful – Matthew 5:7. Mercy has been rightly described as God’s heart in action. He is moved with compassion toward us. Remember the term *pay it forward*? God’s mercy and kindness to us put us in a position to be merciful and kind to others.
- f. Pure in heart – Matthew 5:8. An unpolluted, undivided heart. Pure in the sense of a clean, forgiven heart. Pure in the sense of a wholly devoted heart—no competing idols.
- g. Peacemakers – Matthew 5:9. One who actively makes peace *with* others (Romans 12:18) and actively brings peace *to* others by sharing the gospel (2 Corinthians 5:18–20).
- h. Persecuted for righteousness’ sake – Matthew 5:10–12. This may be the blessing no one wants to claim, but Jesus said that it’s part of being identified with Him (2 Timothy 3:12).

Jesus pronounced us *blessed* or happy. We usually think of happiness as being comfortable or trouble-free. This “happy” is more like *serene*. It’s an unshakeable sense of well-being that is not dependent on outward circumstances.

### Memory Verse

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.  
Repent, and believe in the gospel.”  
Mark 1:15 NKJV

### Think it over . . .

What aspect of your personal “kingdom” is difficult for you to let go?

## Day Three – Salt, Light, and Soil

**Read Matthew 5:13–16 and Luke 8:4–15.**

When we pray, “Your kingdom come,” we are praying for God’s people to be about God’s business of proclaiming the gospel.

1. What do salt and light have in common? In a word, *influence*. After describing what makes a Christian distinct from the world, Jesus used the metaphor of salt and light to illustrate the influence we are meant to have in our culture.

If we want to be salt and light, it helps to be clear what we are aiming for. Do we want the *insta*-influence or the long-obedience-in-the-same-direction version? It’s easier than ever before to access spiritual wisdom from godly influencers. And it’s never been more challenging to cultivate it for ourselves. If we want others to know that we follow Jesus on more than our social media, what will that require? Share your thoughts. (Post them too, if you’d like.)

2. Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone” (Mark 16:15 NLT). The only way people come into God’s kingdom is by hearing *and responding* to the gospel. Our part is to spread the seed as frequently and far as we can, and pray. Only God can change a heart and life. But we can always improve on our delivery. The Parable of the Sower, which is really more about the soil, can help.\* Give some thought and response to the following observations.
  - a. Jesus likens the Word of God to a seed, not a boulder. Consider the difference. For example, a seed penetrates soil—vs—a boulder pulverizes soil. A seed germinates and grows—vs—a boulder smothers any chance of growth beneath where it lands.
  - b. The sower scattered the seed freely as he walked through the field. There’s no indication he was concerned about wasting seed or limiting it to areas he deemed to be good soil.
  - c. Think of your own salvation experience. Did you hear and respond to the gospel right away? Which of the soils (any or all) could you identify with at some point before you were saved? Perhaps even after you were saved? In what way?

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\* You can compare this with the parallel accounts in Matthew 13 and Mark 4 if you like.

3. Name one or two people who were instrumental in praying for you and sowing God's Word into your life. Briefly share how their life and witness influenced you to follow Jesus.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Whose salvation will you pray for? Think of at least three people you will commit to pray for, by name, every day for the next ten days.

**Memory Verse**

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.  
Repent, and believe in the gospel."  
Mark 1:15 NKJV

***Think it over . . .***

Which is easier for you to do: repent . . . or believe?

## Day Four – Come Lord Jesus

### 1 Peter 4:7

“But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.”

“It’s time.” Two simple words with the power to summon up a range of emotions. A sentimental whisper from a father as he walks his daughter down the aisle. For one awaiting test results, it’s the pulse-quickenning announcement that the doctor will see you now. Uttered by an expectant mom, those words set joy into motion. Imagine what it will be like when the one saying, “It’s time,” is Jesus, our returning Lord and King!

1. “Come, Lord Jesus” is the last prayer in the entire Bible (Revelation 22:20). This is what we are asking when we pray, “Your kingdom come.” Someday the Lord will answer that prayer! How should we live as we look forward to the Lord’s return? Read Titus 2:11–15 and answer in your own words.

2. What are some specific ways we can be serious and watchful in our prayers for . . .

- a. The church and our church leaders.
- b. Our nation and our elected officials.
- c. Believers proclaiming the gospel worldwide.

3. “Your kingdom come” means: (Check all that apply.)

- a. Solving social problems and eliminating evil. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Expressing unconditional obedience to God’s reign in my heart and life. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. A prayer for the gospel to be preached in all the world. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Anticipation for the Lord’s return. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Add your own thought. \_\_\_\_\_

## Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

### Memory Verse

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.  
Repent, and believe in the gospel.”  
Mark 1:15 NKJV

### And When You Pray . . .

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

“Prayer is not just  
getting God to move.  
It’s the process  
through which God  
moves and changes us.  
Prayer will not only  
transform what you  
pray about; it will  
transform you.”

Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 6 – Your Will Be Done

Jim Elliot was not well known during his lifetime. He grew up in Portland, Oregon, the son of a Plymouth Brethren evangelist. At Wheaton College, he courted and married a missionary's daughter named Elisabeth. His passion to preach the gospel and see people saved is what led him to Ecuador. *"Lord, fill preachers and preaching with Thy power,"* he wrote in his journal. God answered Jim Elliot's prayer. Martyred by a handful of people he hoped to reach in life, he touched millions with the gospel, including his martyrs, in death. Jim Elliot didn't seek fame, he simply chose to serve the Lord with the grain of wheat he'd been given (John 12:24).

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover the secret of a satisfied life.
- Consider how praying God's will affects your outlook.
- Examine the connection between prayer and praise.
- Pray honest prayers that lead to surrender and transformation.

#### Ice Breaker

By nature, are you are more of a leader? Or a follower? How so?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Proverbs 3:5–6**, **Romans 12:1–2**, and **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Trust and Obey

Read Proverbs 3:5–6 and Psalm 37:1–11.

1. Are we honestly prepared to pray “*Your will be done*” without tacking on a conditional clause here or there? God knows what is best for us and we are usually inclined to agree. Except, of course, when we have a different idea.

- a. **trust** (verb) 1. to believe in the honesty and integrity of; 2. to rely or depend on; 3. to follow without fear of the outcome.

Have you ever trusted God and regretted it? Why or why not?

Have you ever failed to trust God and regretted it? Why or why not?

- b. **acknowledge** (verb) 1. to recognize the authority or claims of; 2. to confess to be true; 3. to express thanks for.

In keeping with each of the three definitions, what will you acknowledge about God’s care and concern for you today?

2. **“I trust God, but sometimes I just can’t figure Him out.”** If we haven’t actually said it, we’ve thought it! David felt the same way when he prayed, “How long, Lord?” (Psalm 13:2). *How long must I wrestle my own thoughts and walk around with a knot in my stomach? What am I missing here, God?* David learned to pray his troubles and leave them with God.

David had a habit of preaching to himself, and we should too. It’s easy to get caught in the crossfire of methods the world offers to get what you want, and lose sight of what God knows is best. Give some thought to David’s advice in Psalm 37:1–11. Put it in practical terms that you can apply to your life.

- a. Trust and do good – verse 3:
- b. Dwell and feed – verse 3:
- c. Delight and He will give – verse 4:
- d. Commit and He will do – verse 5:

- e. Rest and wait patiently – verse 7:
  - f. Do not fret – verse 8:
  - g. Cease from anger, forsake wrath – verse 8:
  - h. Wicked living won't prevail – verse 10. We use *wicked* to describe very bad people, but the biblical definition is *guilty*. It describes anyone who lives as though God does not matter.
  - i. Humble strength succeeds in the long run – verse 11:
3. Has praying for God's will to be done ever changed your outlook on circumstances or your attitude toward another person? In what way?
  4. God has a unique plan for each of us but certain things are God's will for *all* of us. What can you confidently know is part of God's will for you as you pray and cooperate with His leading?

Romans 5:3–5

Colossians 4:2, 5–6

James 1:5

1 John 5:14–15

### **Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV

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### **Think it over . . .**

When and what was the last thing you specifically thanked God for?

## Day Three – I Surrender All

### Read Romans 12:1–2.

Christians are different—*peculiar*, as an old Bible translation puts it. Our neighbors might agree. There are things about the way we live that don't make sense except in terms of eternity.

1. When we pray, “Your will be done” we are aligning our will with God’s. In this phrase, we anticipate the day when earth’s business will be carried out the same way it is right this moment in Heaven—obedience to God every time, all the time. In this phrase, we also pray *and let it begin, here and now, with me.*

- a. **“It’s a good thing God doesn’t give me everything I ask for.”** Most of us will gratefully admit we don’t always know what’s best for us. We pray with limited knowledge and at times in our own self-interest. But our Father in Heaven knows best. When has a “no” or “not yet” answer to prayer stretched your faith? In what way?

- b. **“It’s a good thing to give God everything that *He* asks for.”** This goes right to the heart of what Romans 12:1–2 is about. To live for God, we surrender our entire self to Him—all that we are and all that we have to offer.

*By the mercies of God* – If we skim over this phrase without letting it sink in, we are likely to be overwhelmed. Why is God’s mercy the key element of being able to align our will with God’s?

**“The real secret  
of an unsatisfied life  
lies too often  
in an  
unsurrendered will.”**

Hudson Taylor

*Don’t be conformed...be transformed* – Surrender can be passive, or it can be active. Passive surrender lets the world squeeze us into its mold. Active surrender chooses to obey God’s Word and cooperate with God’s Spirit to change the way we think and live our lives. Which do you choose?

Refusing to conform to the world’s script for living comes with assurances that God will support your decision. What can you be certain of?

John 14:16–17

2 Corinthians 4:7–10

2 Corinthians 4:17–18

Hebrews 13:20–21

2. God has a plan and always finishes what He begins (Philippians 1:6). But He does not force us to submit our will to Him. Where is the motivation to pray, “I surrender all” to be found? Consider what happened to the only man who ever totally surrendered to God’s will.

a. What was Jesus’ attitude toward doing the Father’s will?

John 4:34

John 6:38

John 8:29

Philippians 2:5–8

b. We may say that a child who resists their parent has a strong will. The question is, what kind? Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane took the greatest strength of will there could ever be. From what you read in the text, describe the emotional anguish Jesus endured and His resolve in praying, “*Your will be done.*” What is most striking to you?

Matthew 26:36–46

Hebrews 5:7–9

3. Every one of us is born a rebel. We deserve to have our prayers go unanswered. But Jesus illustrated why we can be confident that God will hear our prayers (Luke 11:11–13). What father, if his son asks for a fish, would give him a snake instead? If he asked for an egg, would his father give him a scorpion? If an earthly father wants nothing but the best for his child, how much more does our Father in Heaven?

Put another way, “We know God will answer us when we call because one terrible day He did *not* answer Jesus when *He* called” (Matthew 27:46).<sup>1</sup>

When we struggle with surrendering our will on any point, a fresh reminder of the gospel can give us the necessary change of heart. Is there something in your life that you want, but don’t have? Something you have, but don’t want? God has a purpose for allowing—or *not* allowing it at this time.

When you take inventory of what is most precious to you, what does surrendering it back to the Lord look like?

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, pg. 237

## Memory Verse

"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."  
1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV

### *Think it over . . .*

Are you more likely to express your thanks with words or with actions?

## Day Four – The Connection Between Prayer and Praise

### Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18.

We have said it before and it bears repeating. Troubles, prayed through honestly and with praise, will change your outlook.

In context, these verses are included in a list of instructions given to the church to be applied individually and during public worship. The last phrase\* applies to all three commands.

Prayer and praise is not just to make us feel better—though it does! Prayer and praise is giving God the glory, honor, and worship that is due to Him for who He is. Give some thought to what that looks like. Give a personal example. Then explain why, and in what way, we practice this together in worship as the body of Christ.

1. **Rejoice always.** Circumstances and emotions change but joy remains.
2. **Pray without ceasing.** Mindful of God's continuous presence and our ongoing dependence.
3. **In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.\***

## Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

### Memory Verse

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV

### And When You Pray . . .

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

“Prayer is not just  
getting God to move.  
It’s the process  
through which God  
moves and changes us.  
Prayer will not only  
transform what you  
pray about; it will  
transform you.”

Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 7 – Our Daily Bread

The 2017 World Happiness Report is out and it's official—Norway is the happiest country on earth, in spite of declining income and freezing weather. Ratings are based on a Gallup poll that uses six variables to measure happiness: income, healthy life expectancy, someone to count on in times of trouble, generosity, freedom, and trust (a perceived absence of corruption in business and government). People were asked to rate their life from “worst possible” to “best possible” on a scale of 0 to 10. Norway credits “high levels of trust and generosity” for its top rank. In spite of improved income and life expectancy, the U.S. dropped to No. 14 down from last year. Why so sad? The report concludes that Americans are looking for happiness “in all the wrong places.”

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover true happiness in trusting God for our daily needs.
- Consider how prayer and God's Word align our hearts back to God's desires.
- Examine why a “do nothing” attitude can actually be a good thing.
- Pray honest prayers that lead to dependence and authentic contentment in life.

#### Ice Breaker

What has been in your “top five” list of prayer requests lately?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:11, Philippians 4:11–13, 19** and **Luke 11:5–13** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Are We Content to Depend on Him?

Read **Matthew 6:11** and **Philippians 4:11–13, 19**.

As Jesus taught us to pray for *our daily bread*, He gives us the right perspective. We are reminding ourselves to depend on God for our material needs and be content with all that He provides.

1. Asking for *daily bread* would remind the people of their ancestors who lived on the manna that God provided every morning. They were to gather only what they needed for the day and use all they collected. When they tried to save it, the manna turned rancid (Exodus 16).

**“We’re tired of the same old nourishing, miraculous bread.”**

Consider how the people responded to God’s provision. At first, they were fascinated with it and tried to hoard it. Then they took it for granted. Soon they were dissatisfied with it and began to complain. Before long, they scorned what God gave them and craved food from Egypt.

Put yourself in Israel’s shoes (which, by the way, did not wear out during their forty-year timeout for poor choices). God met their needs but they struggled with wanting something more, or other. What would you do in a similar position? What can we learn from Israel?

### **“What is it?”**

Manna was like coriander seed, similar in size to a small peppercorn. It had to be gathered before the day got warm or it dissolved. A day’s portion was about two quarts, per person. It was ground into flour and baked, or it was boiled. It tasted like a honey wafer. It was Israel’s staple food for 40 years until the next generation entered the Promised Land. It ceased as suddenly as it first came.

2. When it comes to material things, our *wants* and *needs* often change. We can, and should, make the most of what we’ve been entrusted with. The satisfaction that comes from stuff has a pretty short shelf life—but there’s no expiration date on our relationship with God, and that’s where contentment is stored.
  - a. Writing to the Philippians (from prison) Paul said, “I have *learned* to be content ...” It did not come naturally and it was more than a feeling that comes and goes. From past experience, what could Paul confidently say about God?
  - b. Maybe you relate to Paul’s experience in some way. Paul didn’t say he was content *with* his circumstances. Life was abruptly altered by events beyond his control and the future was unclear. Do you find yourself pressed into God, taking it one day at a time? Briefly share how God is sustaining and teaching you.

3. We should never hesitate to ask God for our material wants and needs. It's not about seeking riches or fearing you'll be poor. It's about seeking God to give us what *He* knows we need in order to live and serve Him well.

God balances our expectations and aligns our hearts back to His desires when we pour all our requests through the purifying filter of His Word. If we are content to depend on *Him* what can we be certain of?

**"God will only give you what you would have asked for if you knew everything He knows."**

Timothy Keller

Proverbs 30:8–9

Matthew 6:32–34

Philippians 2:13–14

1 Timothy 6:6–8

Hebrews 13:5–6

### **Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

**"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."  
Philippians 4:19 NKJV**

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### ***Think it over . . .***

Choose which word in this verse to put the emphasis on as you pray it today.

### Day Three – Asking God for Our Needs

#### Read Luke 11:5–13.

Praying for our needs reminds us that we are in generous and capable hands. Do we believe it? God is ready, willing and able to give us this day, and *every* day, all that we need.

1. If God already knows what we need, why pray? Whatever your request may be, what can you always rely on Him to do for you?

Isaiah 30:18

Jeremiah 33:2–3

John 16:24

Hebrews 4:15–16

Ephesians 3:20–21

2. **God is not your grumpy neighbor** – Luke 11:5–8. Jesus isn't suggesting that God is like a grumpy neighbor who must be badgered into answering prayer. By *contrast*, our Heavenly Father is pleased and ready to answer when we persist in prayer.
  - a. What are some reasons, besides a clear answer from God, that we might give up and quit praying about something?
  - b. Give an example of when you have prayed persistently and God answered. Has it made a difference in the way you approach prayer? In what way?
3. **How much more?** – Luke 11:9–13. Jesus brought His point home by appealing to every father in the crowd. Who would ever think of putting their own child in harm's way or neglect their basic needs? Just as a father takes good care of his kids, God loves to provide all our needs.
  - a. Do you find it easy to trust God to provide for your needs? Why or why not?
  - b. In what ways are you most mindful of your daily dependence on God? In what ways do you tend to be self-reliant?

4. By the way, God also knows what we *don't* need, so let's cross these things off our list. Note what the following scriptures say and how it personally applies to you in this season of life.

No need to worry – Matthew 6:25

No need to fear – Isaiah 41:10

No need to be anxious – Philippians 4:6–7

No need to strive – Matthew 6:19–21

#### **Memory Verse**

“My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”  
Philippians 4:19 NKJV

#### ***Think it over . . .***

Now choose a different word in this verse to put the emphasis on as you pray today.

## Day Four – Obeying God for Others’ Needs

### 1 John 3:16–18 (ESV)

“By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”

By asking God to give *us* our bread, we identify with the needs of others and especially the poor. How can we pray *give us* and not be *givers* ourselves?

1. Jesus told the story of a man who was richly blessed but had a severe case of “I” trouble (Luke 12:17–21). There was nothing improper with the way he gained wealth or what he possessed. But he failed to see beyond doing what made him happy, with no thought for God or others.

- a. Whether we have much or little, we do well to remember that life does not consist in the abundance of what we possess. God promises to bless us when we give with the right attitude. What should be our motive in giving?

Proverbs 3:9–10

2 Corinthians 9:6–8

- b. God calls us to also be generous with our time, energy, and service. What might that look like?

Matthew 25:34–40

James 2:15–17

2. With all this talk of what we can do for others, it really takes a “do nothing” attitude to please the Lord. According to Philippians 2:3–4, what is it?

3. “Give us our daily bread” means: (Check all that apply.)

- a. Hot biscuits and butter every day. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Acknowledges our Heavenly Father is generous and willing to bless us. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Expresses our dependence upon God for every part of life. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Expresses our commitment to be generous toward others. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Add your own thought. \_\_\_\_\_

## Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

### Memory Verse

“My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”  
Philippians 4:19 NKJV

### And When You Pray ...

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

“Prayer is not just  
getting God to move.  
It’s the process  
through which God  
moves and changes us.  
Prayer will not only  
transform what you  
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transform you.”  
Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

### Prayer Requests

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 8 – Forgive Us Our Debts

Debt is a way of life for most people. As American as apple pie—and that pie is getting expensive. In 2016, the average household with credit card debt carried a monthly balance of \$16,748. Add a mortgage, a car loan, and a student loan and that balance jumps to more than \$270,000. Yikes. Fortunately, the experts have some advice . . . you may want to write this down . . . ready? Here it is. Try to increase income and cut expenses. Not the answer you wanted? Please keep reading.

Taking on debt is a short-term fix with costly, long-term results. This is not new, but it is still true. Especially when the debt we're talking about is sin.

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover why forgiven people must be forgiving people.
- Consider the debt you could never repay and no longer owe.
- Examine your capacity for extending forgiveness.
- Pray honest prayers that lead to forgiveness and mercy as a way of life.

#### Ice Breaker

If you could sum up forgiveness in three short rules, what would they be?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:12, 14–15** and **1 John 1:8–9** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Forgive Us Our Debts

**Read Matthew 6:12, 14–15 and Luke 15:11–32.**

When we pray *forgive us our debts*, we are following the Lord's instruction to keep short accounts with sin. At the end of the Lord's Prayer, Jesus shows how our willingness to forgive others will affect our capacity to experience forgiveness and remain in unbroken fellowship with God.

1. Halfway through this prayer, we come to what may be the hardest part. Here it is. Forgive. Asking for forgiveness and extending it to others don't come naturally for us, but that is what Jesus commands us to do. And He is the consummate authority on forgiveness.

- a. Is forgiveness essential to you in everyday life? Why or why not?

- b. Asking forgiveness can sometimes be more difficult than extending it. In what way?

If this aspect of the Lord's Prayer isn't a consistent part of our prayers, we may need to ask God to help us see our sins as He does. (Now that's a prayer He will answer.)

2. **A Tale of Two Sons** – Luke 15:11–32. Jesus told the story of a young man who squandered his inheritance, living the high life until the money (and his friends) ran out. Desperate, he begged a local farmer for a job and ended up feeding hogs. Bankrupt and broken, he came to his senses and wanted to go home.

- a. The son rehearses in his own mind what to say to his father. From what you can tell, describe how the young man sees himself now. What does he muster up enough hope to ask for, and how does his father respond?

- b. The story doesn't stop at the son's homecoming. Jesus went on to talk about the older son who would not forgive his brother and refused to join the feast. As a result, the older son cut himself off from fellowship with his brother *and also* with his father. Explain how this illustrates and drives home the point of Jesus' warning in Matthew 6:14–15.\*

**Believers who refuse  
to confess their sins  
or to forgive  
the sins of others  
only rob themselves of  
the blessings  
God has  
prepared for them.**

Warren Wiersbe

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\*Jesus issues this warning to *believers* who refuse to forgive; the Lord's Prayer is a *family* prayer. Forgiveness that leads to salvation cannot be earned; but refusing to forgive breaks fellowship with God and is part of our loving Father's discipline. Forgiving is not optional for a believer.

3. Does thinking about your sinfulness in terms of debt change or deepen your understanding of God's forgiveness? In what way?

### **Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 ESV

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### ***Think it over . . .***

Is this a promise you regularly claim and exercise? Why or why not?

## **Day Three – As We Forgive Our Debtors**

### **Read Matthew 18:21–35.**

The Bible describes sin in a variety of ways. It defiles us, ensnares us; it crouches at the door. Sin blinds us, deceives us; it binds like chains. It's a heavy burden, cords of wickedness. Sin causes us to miss the mark, to stumble in the dark; it leads us astray. And in this prayer, Jesus calls our sin a debt we can't possibly repay.

1. **A Tale of Two Debtors** – Matthew 18:21–35. One day, Peter asked Jesus how often we should forgive a brother who sins against us. This parable illustrates how forgiven people must be forgiving people.
  - a. The first man owed a billion-dollar debt and pleaded for time to repay it. The master saw his impossible situation and was moved with compassion. Instead of simply giving the debtor more time, how did the master respond to this man's plea for patience?
  - b. The first debtor left there with a clean slate and a new lease on life. But what did he do? He found a fellow servant who owed him a few hundred dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded payment. He refused his friend's plea for patience and chose retribution instead. Explain how this also illustrates and drives home the point of Jesus' warning in Matthew 6:14–15.

2. As it has often been said, when you forgive, you set a prisoner free—yourself. Please listen carefully. Forgiveness is not always a one-stop, get-it-right-the-first-time effort. But God will honor every endeavor to make forgiveness and mercy-giving a way of life for you. You have His Word on it. Take note of the instructions and promises God gives us in these verses.

Psalm 66:18

Mark 11:25

Matthew 5:23–24

3. Looking back, how have you grown closer to God in a season of needing to receive or extend forgiveness? Briefly share one or two insights you gained about God.
4. Which of the following statements are accurate? (Check all that apply.)
- a. Forgiving our debtors condones bad behavior. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Forgiving our debtors requires an apology first. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Forgiving our debtors removes their accountability to God. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Forgiving our debtors sets us free from anger, bitterness, and resentment. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Forgiving our debtors keeps us in unbroken fellowship with God. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Add your own thought. \_\_\_\_\_

### Memory Verse

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 ESV

### *Think it over . . .*

Is there any limit or expiration date on this promise? Is there a condition on this promise?

## Day Four – Spiritual Growth and Prayer

### 1 John 1:8–9 ESV

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Today is a simple exercise in meditating on 1 John 1:8–9, which includes this week’s memory verse. As we near the finish of our **Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer** series, assess your own spiritual growth and prayer. This is *not* a test—just a tool to get you thinking. Put an X on the line wherever it best represents your personal growth from the beginning of this study up to now.

Am I more sensitive to conviction of sin?

← Less Same More →

Am I quicker to repent of sin or to rationalize sin?

← Repent Same Rationalize →

Am I to quicker to forgive? To seek forgiveness?

← Less Same More →

Am I more confident to pray with others? To pray for others?

← Less Same More →

Note and record any additional thoughts or observations as you like.

## Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

### Memory Verse

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 ESV

### And When You Pray ...

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

“Prayer is not just  
getting God to move.

It’s the process  
through which God  
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Prayer will not only  
transform what you  
pray about; it will  
transform you.”

Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight  
from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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## Notes

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## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 9 – Lead Us Not into Temptation

Trouble. As Job said, we are born to it as surely as the sparks fly upward. There is no such thing as a trouble-free life. Think of the caterpillar being transformed into a butterfly. Hard to imagine such an earthbound, grubby little creature could ever fly! But something happens inside that cocoon. When the time comes to emerge, the young butterfly works hard to break through that chrysalis. Without struggle, it would have puny little wings and no strength to fly.

Troubles and temptation are not easy and certainly not pleasant. But God permits the struggle so we can emerge from that chrysalis of testing with fully developed faith.

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover the difference between troubles and temptation.
- Consider how God uses life's problems and our prayers to accomplish His plan.
- Examine why God stores His treasure in jars of clay.
- Pray honest prayers that lead to praise and hold steady with hope.

#### Ice Breaker

Our culture changes the meaning of words like *sinful* or *tempting* in ordinary conversation. In what ways? How might that minimize their effectiveness in the church?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:13**, **John 17:14–17** and **1 Peter 5:6–10** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Real Change Is an Inside Job

### Read James 1:12–14.

When we pray *lead us not into temptation*, we're asking God to protect us from ambush by the enemy's tactics and our own weakness. At the same time, it's a prayer for strength to endure troubles that test our faith.

1. Jesus taught the disciples to pray for protection from temptation. The Lord knew perfectly well what His followers would be up against. It isn't a sin to be tempted, for even Jesus faced temptation and left us an example to follow. How is temptation resisted and overcome?

Matthew 4:1–11

James 4:7–8

2. In the Lord's Prayer, the word used for temptation also means testing. Using James 1:12–14, explain the difference between a test (trial) and being tempted.

**"I have had more  
trouble with myself  
than with any other  
man I have ever  
met."**

D.L. Moody

God does not prevent us from being tempted, but He will always provide a way out. When trouble comes, by temptation or through a trial, it's an opportunity to trust God. Real change is an inside job and strangely enough, both are useful in developing strong faith. It's been suggested that when you aren't experiencing trouble or temptation, pray *lead us not*—and when you *are* in trouble or temptation, pray *deliver us*. Agree? Share your thoughts.

3. Some temptations are meant to charm us and some are designed to cheat us. Either way, the devil's end game is to chain us. As a growing Christian, the daily feed of temptations you used to struggle with may go right into the "spam" file now, without even a look. But the enemy has subtle ways of getting us to open his mail. Consider a few of the more common (as in familiar and frequent) temptations we might face.

Note what the Bible says and identify some ways this temptation might play out in everyday life. Briefly explain the effect it can have and practical ways to resist it.

Grumble / Complain – Philippians 2:14

☐ Charm ☐ Cheat ☐ Both

Lack of Self-Control – Proverbs 25:28

☐ Charm ☐ Cheat ☐ Both

Tongue Control – James 3:5, Ephesians 4:29

☐ Charm ☐ Cheat ☐ Both

Jealousy and Selfish Ambition – James 3:14–16

☐ Charm ☐ Cheat ☐ Both

Love of Money – Hebrews 13:5

☐ Charm ☐ Cheat ☐ Both

Weary in Doing Good – Galatians 6:9–10

☐ Charm ☐ Cheat ☐ Both

### **Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.  
God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability,  
but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape,  
that you may be able to endure it.  
1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV

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### ***Think it over . . .***

When it comes to temptation, why is running always the best option?

### Day Three – Deliver Us from the Evil One

Read John 17:14–17 and 1 Peter 5:6–10.

When we pray *deliver us from the evil one*, we concede our own weakness against Satan's strategies and plead for the greater power of God.

1. Wherever Christians proclaim and live out the gospel, the enemy will oppose them. But we don't face trouble alone or in our own strength. We have rock-solid assurances from God's Word. Who prays for us, and what can we *always* be certain of?

John 17:14–17

Hebrews 7:25

1 John 4:4

2. **Stay Alert, Stand Firm** – 1 Peter 5:6–10. Peter was, by nature, fearless and outspoken. Confidence made him a good leader, but famously got him into trouble on more than one occasion. When the devil looks at **confidence**, he focuses on how to use the first syllable.

- a. On the night He was betrayed, Jesus warned Peter that Satan wanted to sift him like wheat. Peter was confident he could handle it (Luke 22:31–34). Jesus prayed for Peter that night, and it was an older, wiser Peter who wrote this letter to the church. Do you detect aspects of Peter's past experience coming through his counsel? In what way?

- b. For you personally, what stands out most about Peter's counsel in 1 Peter 5:6–10?

- c. We need to be alert and aware of the evil one, but never forget who guards your soul. God's eye is on you and He will work everything for your good.

2 Chronicles 16:9

Romans 8:28–29

- d. Do you find yourself digging more into God's Word when the pressure is on? Share a favorite verse you go to when you need strength for the battle.

3. **Treasure in Clay Jars** – 2 Corinthians 4:5–9. We keep valuables safely locked in vaults. But God chooses to store His treasure, the Gospel, only in vulnerable human containers. We are fragile, breakable clay jars, but the light that is shining in our hearts cannot be extinguished.

The enemy knows this, and hates it. Paul describes his trouble and declares what the enemy failed to do.

Outward Opposition

- But Not -

Inner Effects

Hard pressed (restricted; confined)

Crushed (demoralized; stymied)

Perplexed (unsure of how to proceed)

Despair (without resource or hope)

Persecuted (persistently hassled)

Forsaken (dropped; deserted)

Struck Down (suddenly thrown; laid flat)

Destroyed (reduced to nothing)

- a. Paul did not preach himself—but he certainly preached to himself on a regular basis, and so must we. The devil can't extinguish the power of the Gospel but he can get us to hide our light. Corrie ten Boom, who survived the horrors of Ravensbrück, was fond of saying that God has plans, not problems, for our lives. The darker life got, the brighter and more beautiful the Gospel was for her to share. Do we believe it?

Maybe you can relate to Paul's experience in some way. Is the enemy trying to prevent your light from shining through some difficulty? If you believe God has Jeremiah 29:11 plans for you in spite of the problem, use the space below as a simple prayer.

\_\_\_\_\_ - But Not - \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Paul was not immune to trouble, but he trusted God to protect him from spiritual harm. How does Paul express confidence in God's protection?

Romans 8:31, 37

2 Timothy 4:18

**Memory Verse**

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.  
God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability,  
but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape,  
that you may be able to endure it.  
1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV

**Think it over . . .**

What might a God-chosen way of escape look like? What might a human response look like?

## Day Four – Your Kingdom, Your Power, Your Glory...Forever. Amen!

### Read 1 Chronicles 29:10–13.

When we pray *deliver us from the evil one*, we are looking forward to the day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. It will be the last prayer of all to be answered. God's kingdom will come. God's will on earth will be done just as it is in Heaven.

1. We finished our *David: Profiles of an Authentic Life* series with King David's prayer as he dedicated the future building of the Lord's house. David stood in the place where the temple would be, but was not yet. It is remarkable how similar David's prayer is to the Lord's Prayer. Do you see it? He was praying and praising God for the now and *someday*. And in this last phrase of the Lord's Prayer, we are praying and praising God for the now and *someday*.

It has been said that a believer's life is really marked by only two days on the calendar: this day, and THAT DAY. Give that some thought. What does it mean and how do you want that to be reflected in your life and prayers?

2. David's prayer book is the Psalms, and it is our prayer book too. In 150 separate psalms, we are taught to pray our needs and emotions in healthy, instructive ways. And mostly, we learn to pray our praise. The Lord's Prayer covers the same landscape in 66 words. We hope you will continue to use this pattern of prayer and let it inform the way you read, think, and pray through every other part of the Bible.

Finish your time today with a simple, one-sentence prayer for each:

Your Kingdom

Your Power

Your Glory

Forever!

## Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

### Memory Verse

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.  
God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability,  
but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape,  
that you may be able to endure it.  
1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV

### And When You Pray ...

“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.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

**“Prayer is not just  
getting God to move.  
It’s the process  
through which God  
moves and changes us.  
Prayer will not only  
transform what you  
pray about; it will  
transform you.”**

**Greg Laurie**

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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# The Wonderful Spirit of God

## Getting to know the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, The Spirit of the Living God, Counselor, Helper, Teacher, Sprit of Wisdom and Revelation, Spirit of Jesus, His Divine Power, The Spirit of His Son, The Holy Spirit of Promise, The Spirit of Holiness, The Spirit of Truth, Spirit of Counsel and Might, The Spirit of Grace, The Eternal Spirit, The Spirit of Glory . . . As we study both the Old and the New Testaments, it appears there are at least twenty-five different names for the Spirit. So many names, so many roles.

Can the Holy Spirit of God be known? Can we, as mere humans, grasp Who He is and what He does. Maybe we need to ask, do we want to? The very fact that the Holy Spirit is given many names is *not to cloak* His work and person, but to reveal. He, like God the Father and Jesus the Son desires to be known.

*"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

John 4:23-24 NKJV

So, if we desire to learn more, how do we study the Holy Spirit? He is so—well—invisible. Can you really know Him in a personal way? Or is He meant to be mysterious? Since He does not consist of flesh and blood or atoms and neutrons, this makes Him immaterial. Two definitions of the word immaterial are:

1. Not important
2. Not made of matter.

Which applies? For many, out of sight is out of mind. Because we cannot see, touch or hear Him with the physical senses, sometimes we tend to disregard his existence, influence or necessity as we live our ordinary lives in the "real world." When we disregard His presence and importance are we missing something? Are we living short of all we are meant to have and all we are meant to be in Christ?

Do you know? *"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness."* 2 Peter 1:3 NIV:

Begin by honestly asking yourself the following questions:

1. Are you running on empty when limitless reservoirs are available?
  - *"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness."*
2. Are you trying to do God's work with carnal skills, human wisdom and limited understanding?  
Is there perspiration but no inspiration?
  - *"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness."*
3. Have you begun in the Spirit and now you are trying to become perfect in the flesh?
  - *"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness."*

The format of this lesson might be different than some written studies you have done in the past. The goal is not just to gain knowledge, but:

To know Him  
To love Him  
To trust Him and  
To be His vessel.

All of this is not done just through accumulated information. There must be a deep and personal transaction, a meeting of our heart and soul and mind with the Divine. Therefore, the completing of the pages of this lesson will not be called, “homework,” but instead will be called, “heart-work.” There will be times when you have a pen in hand and fill in the blanks. Then there will be times to put down the pen and let Him fill you. This is what we long for isn’t it? We don’t just need information, we need transformation.

And so, we begin with our eyes lifted and our heart’s humbled before Him, dependent and expectant upon Him. You might want to slip to your knees as you read these words as a prayer to Him. Linger in this prayer, still your heart, and listen after each question. Realize He desires you to know Him even more than you do:

Oh Holy Spirit—*Who are You?*

- What is your role?
- How do you work?
- What can you do?
- What can you do in me?
- When do you speak? What do you say?
- What are you like?
- What do you like?
- Why . . . *why is it* that we so misunderstand you?
- We know sometimes you are quenched, when does that happen?
- And grieved—what grieves your heart?
- How can we, mere humans be filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit and walk in the Spirit?

Oh, Breath of heaven, Spirit of the Living God . . . fall afresh on me.  
 Spirit of the Living God . . . fall afresh on me.  
 Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me . . .  
 Spirit of the Living God . . . fall afresh on me.

## Day #1 Jesus and the Holy Spirit

*"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." John 7:37-38 NKJV*

*"By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." (John 7:39 NIV)*

Although there are many places to begin a study of the Holy Spirit, this image is so full of passion and beauty it seems like an appropriate beginning. Often people think merely of the commands of God. But here we see, one of many—and yet one of the *most irresistible* invitations. As with most of the scenes of the Bible, we can understand it more clearly and personally if we try to place ourselves there, on that last day of the feast. Jerusalem was crowded. The celebration was almost over. As usual, Jesus had observed the people. As usual, as He watched them, He was moved with compassion. Read these words again, letting the images form in your mind, and then letting those images settle deeper, hopefully stirring you, awakening you to a desire for what He is offering. Now, will you pray and ask Him to speak these words of invitation to your “inner most being”?

**\*Pause for Prayer\***

1. Look now at each phrase in John 7:37-38. Each one is full of rich meaning. As you answer the questions, try to add personal insight or perspective.

A. "On the last day, that great day of the feast . . ." Think about holidays. Often we approach them expecting them to be full of meaning. We hope the celebration will give us joy and satisfaction and bring us closer to God. But do we sometimes end these times drained instead of filled? Explain why "the last day" was the perfect time for Jesus to come and say this.

B. "Jesus stood and cried out . . ." Describe your thoughts as you picture Jesus. Picture His sense of urgency and entreaty.

C. "Saying, 'If anyone thirsts . . ." To thirst is to crave or to yearn. Of course He was not talking about a physical thirst. To whom and what was He referring? What is spiritual thirst?

D. "Let him come to Me . . ." It seems appropriate to linger over this phrase. Read it over and over. The Bible says, "the Lord longs to be gracious to you". Think about the word "come". Be still before Him for a moment before you share what the message of these words means.

D. "And drink." To drink is a verb: to partake, to take in, to swallow. Notice He did not say "sip". What instruction is He giving and why is this important?

F. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said . . ." "Believe" is also a verb. What does it mean to truly believe in Jesus? Use scripture to support your answer if possible.

G. "Out of his heart . . ." The concept of the term "heart" is important. At what level of your being is this message directed? Pause here and think about this. Pause and talk to Him about this. Include in your answer an honest and sincere prayer.

H. "Will flow rivers of living water." Will—flow—rivers—living water: each of these words is full of descriptive information. In your own words, define the intended meaning here.

2. Having broken this invitation down to understand each aspect, let the image merge back together in all of it's beauty and richness. Prayerfully, read it over again. Take the time to be still and listen to the voice of Jesus speak to your heart. **\*Pause for Prayer\***

*Memory Verse: Write out this verse on a 3x5 index card.*

*"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." John 7:37-38 NKJV*

## **Day #2      Inseparable**

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. When God created man, He said, "let us make man in our image." The plural pronouns "us" and "our" inform us of the tri-unity of God. We see the persons of the Godhead as distinct in such statements as: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," (Matthew 28:19 NKJV).

In today's lesson, we will not try to isolate the Holy Spirit as a separate person so we can understand Him more clearly. The fact is this cannot truly be done. His person and His ministry are so woven with the Father and the Son, He can only be understood and appreciated in His interconnection and united purpose with them. So, in today's lesson, we will simply enjoy the majesty of this weave.

1. In Matthew 3:16-17 we see the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. All three persons were present and participated in this important moment. Pause and reflect on the power, holiness and glory that was present and displayed. Read the account and answer the following:

A. What impact do you think this would have made on those who witnessed this glorious event?

B. "He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him." This is a beautiful picture. The Holy Spirit is not a dove. Why do you think that He manifested His presence in this way? Does this picture of gentleness and peacefulness effect the attitude and view you have of His presence in your life? Share your thoughts.

2. The following is another masterpiece moment at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The Father had sent Jesus, His mission was clear. The full divine power and presence of the Holy Spirit was behind this mission. All three were united. In this proclamation, the heart of all three persons of God is expressed. We will never understand the will and way, heart and mind of the Holy Spirit apart from this mission statement.

Jesus stood and read the scroll written about Him,

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:18-19 KJV*

Jesus healed many with physical illnesses. But it was the inner condition of the soul and spirit of man that He came to give ultimate healing to. Consider the different phrases in these verses and share your thoughts on each. Looking up some of the words (like deliverance or brokenhearted) will give you richer insight.

- "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me
  - to preach the gospel to the poor;
  - he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted,
  - to preach deliverance to the captives,
  - and recovering of sight to the blind,
  - to set at liberty them that are bruised,
  - To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."
3. Many people wonder why and when the power of the Holy Spirit will infuse *our* human efforts. We ask, "when will He anoint His servants?" Why don't we see His power present in so many churches and Christian endeavors today? Read Luke 4:16-19 again. Why do you think?

Memory Verse: Read this verse several times and then try to repeat portions without looking at it.

*"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" John 7:37-38 NKJV*

## Day #3 Spiritual life

1. Dead or alive? Physical activity, achievement does not constitute Spiritual life—they never have and never will. A voice (the Lord's) says, "Cry out."  
*"All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."*  
*(Isaiah 40:6-8 NIV)*  
 This is a message that God wants us to proclaim, to "cry out". Why do you think it is important for people to understand how temporary our earthly existence is?
  
2. Read John 3:1-8. This is a familiar passage to many people. But even if you have read it many times, read it with a fresh interest. Think about Nicodemus that night as he came to Jesus. He was no longer young. He had moved in the elite religious circles. He must have seen first hand the many disappointing results of religious striving.
  - A. Carefully read again these phrases and describe your reactions:  
 "not see the Kingdom"  
 "not enter the Kingdom"  
 "that which is born of flesh is flesh"
  
  - B. When Jesus spoke these words to Nicodemus they were not meant to be bad news. This was good news—very good news. Explain why.
  
  - C. (Galatians 4:6-7 KJV) *"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."*  
 Let the wonder of the Spiritual life wave over your soul. To be born—by His Spirit—is to be a child of God. You may write your thoughts but, more importantly, pause and thank the Lord for this miracle. Call Him *Abba*. Know that it is the Holy Spirit in you that makes that cry to the Father. Sit still and marvel. **\*Pause and pray\***, thanking Him for Spiritual life.
  
  - D. In John 3:8, Jesus makes a very interesting statement: *"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."* Notice the words, "So it is with **everyone** born of the Spirit." The wind cannot be packaged. There is an energy, freshness and freedom that cannot always be understood. *"So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."* Does this intrigue you? Does this excite you? Could you say that there is an inner responsiveness to the stirrings and promptings of the Spirit? Would you like there to be? **\*Pause to ponder\*** Then share your thoughts.

*Memory Verse: Write out the words of John 7:37-38 NKJ.*

## Day #4      Born Into a Spiritual Family

1. How is one born again? How does the Spirit of God come to live within us? In Acts 10:44-47 God allows us to observe people becoming born again. If you have ever been present when someone accepts Jesus, you can testify that it is thrilling. There may not be a dramatic manifestation as recorded here, but you are aware that something supernatural occurred. Read the Acts account and record what you learn.
  
2. The Spiritual life is full of rich heritage, benefits, privileges and eternal destiny. Read the following scriptures several times. Try to picture and absorb what is said. Do you truly picture yourself in such a relationship with God? You might want to jot down a few thoughts on each but, more importantly, **\*pause and pray\***, asking Him to make these truths real and life changing to you.
  - A. (Ephesians 2:18-19 NKJV) "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. {19} Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."
  
  - B. (Romans 8:16-17 NKJV) "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, {17} and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

*Memory Verse: "On ----- , that great day of the feast, ----- stood and ----- , saying, "If anyone -----, let him come to ---- and drink. He who ----- --- ----, as the Scripture has said, ----- will flow rivers of -----." John 7:37-38*

## Day #5      Seeking The Spirit

In Day #1, we looked at Jesus' gracious invitation to give us an abundance of His Spirit. In today's lesson, we will look at the conditions of accepting and receiving what He has to offer.

1. In Matthew 5, Jesus made some statements that are unusual, different from the average way of looking at life. He uses the word *blessed* in the same sentences as *poor* and *hunger* and *thirst*. Blessed is a deeper word than "happy." Happiness is dependant on favorable circumstances. Blessedness is an inner satisfaction that can only come from God. In each of the following statements, there is a pre-condition and a reward. Describe each.
  - A. (Matthew 5:3 KJV)
  
  - B. (Matthew 5:6 KJV)

2. The prophet Isaiah spoke to God's people. He expressed God's broken heart over their cold and callused hearts. As you read each of the following, do you see parallels in God's people today? More importantly, do you see any of these attitudes in your own spiritual desires and responses? Explain your thoughts.

A. (Isaiah 55:1-3 NIV) "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. {2} Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. {3} Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David."

B. (Isaiah 28:12 KJV) "To whom He said, 'This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: *yet they would not hear.*'"

3. And now—how about you? Would you like to know Him more? Do you need His presence more fully, more freely in your life? Do you feel that you have merely sipped and have not drunk? Do you wonder what to do about it? Thankfully the Lord makes it as easy as a child asking his father for what he needs. For that is precisely what this is, a child asking his Father for what she (you) needs.

Jesus says, "So I say to you:

- Ask and it will be given to you;
- seek and you will find;
- knock and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. {11} "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? {12} Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? {13} If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:9-13 NIV)

Will you kneel before Him? Hear Him saying the words, "I say *to you*....." Throughout the day, and in the days ahead, ask with the faith in your heart that you are asking "according to His will." It is not necessary to look for dramatic manifestations. But do look for and expect a fresh sense of His presence, more joy in reading His Word, more sensitivity to the promptings within your heart of His leading.

*Memory Verse: Write out your verse, including the scripture address.  
Share what it has meant to you this week.*



# The Wonderful Spirit of God

## Getting to know the Holy Spirit

***“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”***

***John 14:16-17 (NKJV)***

The Force be with you!?! Do you have a concept of the Holy Spirit as a non-living, power to be captured? If many, even Christians were honest, they would say “yes”. Wind, rushing wind, rivers of water, a dove, tongues of fire, all these words are used as images, but no single image can describe the entirety of Who He is.

<sup>i</sup> R.A.Torrey writes, “If we think of the Holy Spirit, as so many do, as merely a power or influence, our constant thought will be, “How can I get more of the Holy Spirit” But if we think of Him in the biblical way as a divine person, our thought will rather be, “How can the Holy Spirit have more of me?”

This week, our focus will be on His personality as a divine person in our lives. As our view of Him expands, so should our respect, reverence and reliance.

**Question: *Who* lives in you?**

**"Do you not know that you are the temple of God  
and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"**

**1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV)**

“Don’t you know?” It is interesting that the apostle Paul asked the believers in the church in Corinth that question. In fact, he asked them the same question twice. Probably, they were much like us today. We know—as a Biblical fact--but we don’t live like we know. This truth just somehow has not become a conscious, captivating reality.

For some of us-----there is the possibility that we *don’t want* to know. It seems so strange. And then, because we don’t really know what He is like, He is a stranger. So we could say, “it is strange to be inhabited by a stranger”. But then the tragic result of our ignorance is indifference or resistance.

<sup>ii</sup>R.A. Torrey writes this, “Thousands and tens of thousands of men and women can testify to the blessing that has come into their own lives as they have come to know the Holy Spirit. They have come to know the Holy Spirit not merely as a gracious influence (emanating, it is true, from God) but as a real person, just as real as Jesus Christ Himself, an ever-present, loving Friend and mighty Helper Who is not only always by their sides but Who dwells in their hearts every day and every hour and Who is ready to undertake for them in every emergency of life.”

How do we get to know the Holy Spirit, and thus develop a relationship? This is done in much the way we get to know anyone, by learning all we can about them and their unique personality. The three characteristics of a person are; knowledge, will and emotion. Personality is portrayed through these characteristics.

- Knowledge: It is not just what He knows (which of course is everything), but how He thinks, what is on His mind.
- Emotions: It is odd for some--to think of God having emotions. But throughout Scripture, the emotions of God are expressed, from love to anger. It is therefore important to understand when His love is expressed and also what causes Him grief and anger.
- Will: We want to know both "the what" of His will and "the why". What are His ultimate goals and priorities? It is much easier to be flexible and committed, even delighted with a path when we are confident that it will lead us to what is good and right and true.

## Day #1      The Mind of the Spirit

Are you ever confused? Do you sometimes make errors in judgements? Would you like to have a greater understanding of life? We live in a world that has a sea of information, but how do we sort out what is valid? Lies, deception and distortion of the truth abound. Do you ever wish you could get deep, wise, safe counsel regarding issues and decisions in your life? God wants this for you too----and for this, He sent His Holy Spirit----the Spirit of Truth.

1. Knowledge: the following Scripture is a prophecy regarding Jesus. The Spirit played an active role in the Savior's life and ministry. Share your thoughts as you read each section of the description in Isaiah 11.

(Isaiah 11:2-4 NIV) "The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—

{3} and He will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what He sees with His eyes, or decide by what He hears with His ears;

{4} but with righteousness He will judge the needy, with justice He will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth; with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked."

Vs. 2: Notice the way the Spirit comes—*resting on Him*.

Look up the definitions of the following:

Wisdom:

Understanding:

Counsel:

Knowledge:

Delight:

Vs. 3: Ponder being able to see beyond the obvious.

Vs. 4: Notice the purpose and usefulness of *spiritual* knowledge.

2. Jesus was endued with the Spirit of Wisdom. This “endowment” is also available to us. Ask yourself, “Do you need this? Do you want this?” What do you learn from Ephesians 1:17-19? Think about the purpose and results of His influence.

“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. {18} I pray also 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 the saints, {19} and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,”” (Ephesians 1:17-19 NIV)

**\*Pause to Pray this wonderful prayer for yourself. Linger over each phrase to let your heart absorb it and to let the Spirit speak\*** Would you like to give a gift to someone you care about? Pause and pray these words for them too.

3. As we learned in Isaiah, Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding. Therefore, think about the effect that His fullness can and should have in your life. Think about the results of living *without* His influence. Write out the words of 2 Timothy 1:7 and state what you learn.

**Memory Verse:** Write out the words of this week’s memory verse on a 3x5 card.

*“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”*  
John 14:16-17 (NKJV)

## Day #2 The Spirit Feels

As humans, we cannot always trust our feelings. And yet we know, without emotions, life is bland and hollow. When God created us in His image, He created us with the capacity for and the desire to feel on an emotional level.

In our study today, we will look at various scriptures that show an emotional response by the Spirit. As you realize that the Spirit has these feelings, you will find yourself relating and responding to Him in a way you might never have before. Look for a warmth and sense of closeness that only comes with someone you relate to on an emotional level. You may not be able to trust your emotions, but you can entrust your emotions to Him.

1. The Spirit loves. As you read Romans 15:30, the neutral, impersonal power image of the Spirit dissipates. The Spirit does not just impart love to us-----He loves us. Think about some of the roles that He fulfills, i.e. teacher, counselor, guide, comforter. Explain the difference it makes when someone who truly and deeply loves you fulfills these roles. Share your thoughts.
2. The Spirit can be grieved. Grief is more than just anger. It is to feel pain or anguish. Read Ephesians 4:28-31.
  - A. What causes the Spirit to grieve?
  - B. Why does the Spirit grieve instead of just get angry?
  - C. **\*Personal-heart searching\*** Is there any situation in your life right now that is causing grief to the Spirit? When you think of this, does it stir your heart to want to eliminate that thing that brings sorrow to His heart? Can you see how His tender care for you tenderly pulls you *away* from the destructive and *toward* the good?

### Day #3 The Will of the Spirit

Everyone----who is *anyone*, has a will. We certainly do. The definition of will is: the power to choose or decide. This includes desire and determination. We can view this in two different ways. For those of us who seek divine purpose and direction, this gives us, not only hope, but a sense of excitement and anticipation. But, if we realize that our will might stand in conflict to His, we have a problem. He will always allow us the choice of being *willful* or *willing*.

1. How do we know the will of the Spirit? In Acts 13:1-5 we see a wonderful display of the Spirit directing. Read this over several times. Picture yourself in the midst of this group. Imagine what was on their hearts that day. Think about the atmosphere and attitude of this group of believers. The Holy Spirit communicated clearly to them. Probably He spoke through one of them as a prophecy and all of their spirits resonated in confirmation. It appears there was no question or confusion.

“In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. {2} While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." {3} So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. {4} The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. {5} When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.” (Acts 13:1-5 NIV)

Let's look for practical lessons from this example in Acts 13.

- A. Think about the spiritual atmosphere of this gathering. This was not a business or committee meeting to organize and orchestrate *their plans*. Possibly, sending out two of their key leaders was the last thing on their minds. What was the first thing on their hearts and minds? Explain what you learn.
  
  - B. "Set apart for me..."-----these are fascinating and endearing and exciting words. Would you like, and can you imagine, the Spirit clearly applying this phrase to you for a specific call or service? Share your thoughts. **\*Pause and Pray\***, asking the Lord to reveal His thoughts regarding this concept.
  
  - C. Consider what you learn from the actions described in Acts 13:3 (printed above). Should we use this as a model? How can we? Will we? Make a practical application.
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2. The Spirit is also able to show us our actions and attitudes that are *contrary* to His will. We can make a tragic mistake by disregarding His prompting. The apostle Paul was a very strong willed and determined person. Like some of us, decisions came "naturally" to him. Acts 16:6-8 describes the Spirit's intervention in some of these "seemingly right" plans.  
 "Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. {7} After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. {8} So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas." (Acts 16:6-8 NKJV)
    - A. It is interesting to ponder what methods the Spirit might have used to "forbid" them to continue with their plans. Perhaps there was an unsettling "check" in their spirits. There could have been a series of "red flags" in their circumstances. Maybe there was a scripture that kept coming to their hearts that seemed to warn them. Have you ever felt a "holy tug" on *your* heart that seemed like a warning from the Spirit? Explain.
  
    - B. Their desire to evangelize in Asia certainly would have appeared good and right. Although we are not given the "whys", what could have been the reasons for this redirection? Think of several possibilities.
  
    - C. Paul and his companions had experienced a "no". It appears that they not only recognized it, but without significant struggle, they accepted it. Acts 16:8-14 gives us a picture of the door of ministry that then opened before them. This new endeavor *was* the will of the Spirit. Read this carefully, gleaning as many lessons as you can.

3. The will of the Spirit is always perfectly “in sync” with the Father and Jesus. Would you like the Spirit to reveal this will to you? Romans 12:1-2 explains the essential steps that you need to take. Read this several times, and then describe what you learn, personalizing your answer.

**Willing or willful? Is *your* will perfect---or is *His*? \*Pause to Pray\***

*Memory Verse: John 14:16-17* Write out as much as you can from memory. Write it again.

## **Day #4      The Person of the Holy Ghost**

In today's lesson we will look at the type of abilities and activities that the Spirit has and does which only a person has or does. As we look at each one, may He become more personified to us. May we want to learn to respond to and interact with Him as a person. He is not a cold impersonal power or force. He is someone we can know, love and trust. May He no longer be the “stranger within you”. May you even smile and eagerly welcome His presence. As you read each of these scriptures about what He does, will you write your thoughts and then pause to pray, asking Him to performance each of these roles in your life.

1. He speaks: Hebrews 3:7.
2. He Prays: Romans 8:26.
3. He Teaches: John 14:26.
4. He Testifies: John 15:26.
5. He Appoints: Acts 20:28.
6. He Fellowships with us: 2 Corinthians 13:14.

**Memory Verse:** Verbally recite John 14:16-17. Share your memory verse with someone else.

## Day #5 Walking in the Spirit

Galations 5:25 tells us; “Since we live by the Spirit, Let us keep in step with the Spirit.” This week, we have discovered that the Spirit is wise and knowledgeable, He loves us and is willing to guide us. In light of this, why wouldn’t we seek to “walk in the Spirit”? Why indeed? Looking for His presence and guidance daily is one of great joys and benefits of the Christian life.

1. Paul was baffled when he learned that the Christians in the church in Galatia had slipped entirely away from reliance on the Spirit. Try to imagine the disappointment and frustration in his heart as he penned these words; *"I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?"* (Galatians 3:2-3 NIV)

A. Why do we sometimes foolishly choose to rely upon our own natural ability instead of His?

B. Read Isaiah 26:18 and explain the futility of self-effort. Give a personal example if possible.

C. What does Zechariah 4:6 tell us regarding this subject?

2. **\*Final Reflection\*** In lesson #1 we prayed and asked, “Who are you Holy Spirit?” Can you now say you understand and are more comfortable with Him? Is He becoming less of a stranger? Express your *thoughts* and even your *emotions*.

**\*Pause and Pray\*** Interact with Him in prayer, reflecting your new depth of familiarity and appreciation for Him.

**Memory Verse:** Write out the memory verse from this week, including the reference address of the text. Share how the truth found in this verse has given you confidence, encouragement or hope.

**Previous Memory Verse.** Write out last week’s verse.

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<sup>i</sup> The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit by R. A. Torrey, page 8

<sup>ii</sup> The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit by R. A. Torrey, page 9





# The Wonderful Spirit of God

## Getting to know the Holy Spirit

*"I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you."*  
*John 16:7 NKJV*

Could there be anything better than having Jesus physically with you? Good question! Jesus said there would be *and is!* This week we will see how this is true.

John chapters 13-17 records the last supper and the last hours Jesus spent with His disciples. They did not fully realize the gravity of the events that would unfold in the next few hours and days, but He did. He loved them very much. They had walked, talked, prayed and ministered side by side with Him. He was God in the flesh. No group of men had ever had the benefit of witnessing God's power, teaching and love in this way before. But all this would change. He would be gone in His physical presence—what a devastating loss this would seem to them.

Once Judas left their group, Jesus began to unfold some astonishing and encouraging information. John 14 begins with Jesus giving them words of comfort. *"Let not your heart be troubled or afraid."* He proceeds to tell them that their new experience would be better. He would send them another helper--not of a different caliber--but of the very same and equal quality as himself.

It is important for us to carefully understand each piece of the picture that Jesus laid before his disciples that night. There was to be no misunderstanding. The stakes were too high. Their lives were too valuable and their mission too important. That night, Jesus left them with confidence they would be well taken care of.

### Day #1 Jesus, teach us, *please tell us about the Spirit.*

**\*Pause to Pray\*** Ask Jesus to speak to your heart as clearly as He did that night to the disciples the night He taught them about the coming of the Spirit to indwell and help them. Seek to understand not just what He told them, but what He wants *you* to understand.

1. Let's look again at last week's memory verse, adding verse 18. We will consider the importance of the truths found in the words that are **bolded**.

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another **Helper (Comforter, Counselor)**, that He may abide with you **forever**; {17} "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. {18} I will **not leave you orphans; I will come to you.**" (John 14:16-18 NKJV)

- A. Jesus called the Spirit "**Comforter**". The Greek word has a rich and multidimensional meaning: par-ak'-lay-tos; an intercessor, consoler--advocate, helper, comforter. A person who comforts brings strength, hope and/or sympathy. His name "parakletos" describes the kind of help that He brings into your life. Ponder the significance of the different facets and then share your insights.

- B. **“He will abide with you forever.”** Forever is a powerful concept. Why do you need to know this? Why do you need to believe this?

**Forever means continually, it is so important for us to know He is continually with us**

- C. The world is full of people who are or feel like orphans. This is a lonely and fearful state. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes. He does not *just come*, He *comes to us*. **\*Pause to ponder.\*** Describe your thoughts. **Then \*Pause to Pray.\***  
He always meets us where we are

***\*Up close and personal\* Maybe someone you loved has, died or left. This leaves you with a void in your heart. The Lord Himself wants to speak the following words to you personally.***

"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."

(Isaiah 49:15-16 KJV)

2. The Comforter: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in *all* our troubles, so that we can comfort those in *any* trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." (2 Corinthians 1:3-4 KJV) Underline and contemplate the words that seem significant in this verse.

The definition of comforting is: bringing strength, hope, or sympathy. The state of comfort is one that is free from anxiety, pain or suffering, satisfied and content. Think of how truly rare this seems at times and how needed this is. The Father sends the Comforter to fulfill the promise stated in 2 Corinthians.

- A. Consider the words, "*all our troubles*" and "*any trouble*". Explain what you learn.
- B. The fact that the Lord makes comfort available does not always guarantee that we accept it. Ponder this truth for a moment before you share your thoughts. In that moment of reflection, let the Holy Spirit give you insight and then share what you learn.
- C. Personal. Is there a situation that you need comfort? Think about the results in your thoughts and emotions because you remain "uncomforted". Will you be still before Him, and ask Him to help you receive.

**Memory Verse:** Write out the words of this week's memory verse on a 3x5 card.

*"Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20:21-22 NIV)*

## Day #2      Jesus, please tell us more.

As Jesus continued to teach the disciples, He often repeated truths He had already told them, adding new facets. The purpose of repetition is both for emphasis and retention of a concept. Notice in today's verses, the Spirit's roles and activities are interwoven, always in conjunction with the Father and Son.

### 1. Spiritual teaching and learning:

(John 14:26-27 KJV) "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name,

He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

{27} Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

A. The Spirit's role as comforter is closely tied with His role as teacher. Why is it comforting to know the truth instead of believing lies? Give a specific example if possible.

B. Jesus is "The Word" and "The Truth". The Spirit teaches the truth. What confidence should this give you as you read the Bible?

C. Peace. Why do you think learning and remembering the truth will result in peace?

D. Why is this different than what the world offers?

E. It appears that we have a decision. In this statement, Jesus is asking us to make a choice. Will you allow the Spirit---to fulfill His role as a peace-giver?

(John 15:26 NKJV) ""But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me."

2. The Spirit's role is not to testify of Himself, it is to testify of Jesus. Look up the word "testify". Share the significance of this fact.

3. The Spirit is sent from the Father. Ponder again the promise of Luke 11:13: "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" As we learn more about the Spirit's role in our lives, we learn more about the Father's love. **\*Pause to Thank and Praise Him\***

4. You will never know Jesus in His fullness apart from the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit fills and floods your life, you will come to understand the cross, the depth of Jesus' love and the power of His forgiveness more fully. The blood of Jesus removes the barrier of sin that separates us from the Father. **\*Pause for Prayer\*** Ask the Spirit to testify to you anew of the wonderful truth of the following scripture:

*"For through him (Jesus) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."*  
(Ephesians 2:18-19 KJV)

**Memory Verse:** Fill in the blanks.

*"Again Jesus said, "----- be with you! As the ----- has sent me, I am sending -----." And with that He ----- on them and said, "-----the Holy Spirit." (John 20:21-22 NIV)*

## Day #3 Jesus Opens the Treasure Chest of Heaven

1. In our study today, we will look at the riches available for us—and the Spirit's role in delivering them to us.

{13} "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and

He will tell you things to come.

\*Notice that the book of Revelation is one of the fulfillments of this promise.

{14} "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

A. What do you learn in verse 13 that adds to what you have already learned?

B. The Holy Spirit does not play the role of a crystal ball, but He often prepares you for the things to come in your life. Can you think of a situation in your life, that when you look back, you can see How the Lord placed clues in your path and prepared you beforehand?

C. Who is glorified when the Spirit is working? What does the Spirit do that gives glory to Jesus?

{15} "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you." (John 16:13-15)

D. Verse 15 makes an intriguing statement. Notice that the Father, Son and Spirit are committed to making all that they have accessible to you.

5. As a child of the King of the Universe, we are fabulously wealthy in the spiritual realm. And yet, the sad tragedy is that we like paupers--spiritually. It is time for this to change in the family of God! But that change can and will only happen---in one child of God at a time.

Record the insights you gain as you read the following "treasure chest" of scripture. Underline key words and thoughts. Be conscious of the reality that this is for you, personally. Pause and ponder as the Spirit gives enlightenment and joy in the discovery of each truth.

(1 Corinthians 2:9-14 NKJV) "But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

Record points to Ponder:

{10} But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

{11} For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

{12} Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. {

13} These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

{14} But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

**\*Pause for Prayer\*** 1 John 5:14-15 tells us that if we pray in accordance with God's will, we can have confidence that our prayer will have a "yes" answer. The prayer below can be prayed with certainty and eager expectation. Circle different truths as you pray. By faith, accept the "yes" from the Father.

*"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. {18} I pray also 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 the saints, {19} and his incomparably great power for us who believe." (Ephesians 1:17-19a NIV)*

**Memory Verse:** Write below the words of this week's memory verse, *John 20:21-22 NIV*.

## Day #4 "To Your Advantage"

1. Jesus told his disciples, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you." (John 16:7 NKJV).

A. If you were one of his disciples, could you have imagined that this could be true? Share your thoughts.

B. If the choice were given to us, to walk with Jesus side by side, or to have the Spirit of Jesus dwell inside, honestly, sometimes we would prefer His physical presence. So why did He say the Helper's coming was the greater advantage?

2 In John 16:8-11, Jesus explained some additional roles that the Holy Spirit performs in the world. Each is extremely important. They are things that no human effort can accomplish. When we first read of what He does, it might seem like the harsh side of the Spirit. However, He is like the watchman on the wall shining the light in the darkness and warning. Oh, that the hearts of lost and dying souls would respond to the Spirit's work among them, to open their eyes to the destruction of sin and the future destruction of the world.

"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

- of sin, because they do not believe in Me;
- of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;
- of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." John 16:8-11

A. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 6:23 NKJV) To convict is not just to make one feel bad for sin, but to convince us that something ought to be done about it. This is the role of the Holy Spirit. Think about the great benefit of this. What would the world be like if there was no hope of sinners realizing their sinfulness? Share your thoughts.

- B. The definition of Righteous is: innocent, holy, just, meet, right. Humanly speaking, this is a very high, unattainable standard. "As it is written: *"There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."*" (Romans 3:10-12 NIV) Read Romans 5:18-19 and share what the Holy Spirit ministers to your heart regarding this..

- C. John 3:17-18 gives a more description of the connection between belief, sin and judgement. Explain what you learn from the following.

(Romans 4:19-25–Romans 5:1-2 NIV) "Without weakening in his faith, he (Abraham) faced the fact that his body was as good as dead--since he was about a hundred years old--and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness--for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification."

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

- D. Revelations 20:10 describes the final judgment of the ruler of this world. Record his penalty.

**\*Pause to ponder and pray\*** The Holy Spirit is moving through the world bringing the truth of man's lost condition, so that people will respond to the need they have and the hope and solution that is offered. If there is someone you love who has not responded to the Gospel? Do not give up hope. Pray with confidence in the Spirit's ability to prick the conscience and stir even a seemingly hardened soul.

**Memory Verse:** Write John 20:21-22 below. Share it with someone else today.

## Day #5      The Breath of Heaven

The coming of the Holy Spirit to dwell in the lives of men and women is exciting, amazing and life changing.

1. To fully understand the meaning of the event described in this week's memory verse, John 20:21-22, we must first understand the context. After the resurrection, Mary had gone to the

tomb and discovered that the tomb was empty. John 20:18-20 tells us what happened right before He said, *"Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."* And with that he breathed on them and said, *"Receive the Holy Spirit."*

- A. What insight do you gain from reading John 20:18-20? Consider that the disciples had failed the Lord during His arrest and crucifixion, even though they had thought that they would be strong. Consider how inadequate they must have felt—the wind of their confidence literally had been knocked out of them. Consider how surprising it must have been for Lord to tell them that He now was sending them to *go out to represent Him*.
  - B. Jesus said, “receive”. This was more than a breath of fresh air. He was breathing into them “*breath*” that lived in Him. Oh---the Holy wonder of this moment. **Pause and ponder**, taking this in. You may record your thoughts, but more importantly, let the Holy Spirit etch this reality on the tablet of your heart.
2. Jesus said He was sending them, like the Father sent Him. Matthew 28:18-20 clarifies where and why He was sending them. What do you learn from each phrase?
- A. "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
  - B. {19} "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
  - C. {20} "teaching them to observe (obey) all things that I have commanded you;
  - D. and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen."

**The River Comes--** Oh---the difference a day makes

And now-----for the grand finale--Pentecost! Or, instead of the finale, was the day of Pentecost----a beginning, a grand beginning? Although Jesus had breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit, there was more. He said to wait for the fullness of this promise and additional power. Although they had to wait for the day of Pentecost, we don't.

As you reading the following account described in Acts, ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand this dynamic moment in history. Record what you learn. Add the insight He brings to your mind.

(Acts 1:4-5 NKJV) "And being assembled together with them, He (Jesus) commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; {5} "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'"



(Acts 1:8 NKJV) ""But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.""

(Acts 2:1-7 NKJV) "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. {2} And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. {3} Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. {4} And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. {5} And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. {6} And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. {7} Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"

### **The Transformation of the Spirit Filled Life**

"The expression, "the exchanged life," was first used, as far as I know, by J. Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission. Out of striving and struggling, out of discouragement and defeat he came to the realization of life more abundant in Christ. I have found no happier description than his: "*The Exchanged Life*".<sup>1</sup> V. Raymond Edman

The Pre-Pentecost and Post Pentecost experience in a person's life is beautifully described in this portion of A.B. Simpson's poem entitled Himself:

Once 'twas painful trying, now 'tis perfect trust;  
Once a half salvation, now the uttermost;  
Once 'twas ceaseless holding, now *He holds me* fast;  
Once 'twas constant drifting, now my anchor's cast.

Once it was *my* working, His it hence shall be;  
Once I tried to use Him, now He uses me;  
Once the power I wanted, now the Mighty One;  
Once for self I labored, now for Him alone.....

**Memory Verse:** Write John 20:21-22 below.

**Memory Verse:** Recite the previous 2 week's verses.

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<sup>1</sup> They Found the Secret, V. Raymond Edman, page 13



# The Wonderful Spirit of God

## Getting to know the Holy Spirit

*"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels,  
that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7 NKJV*

When Jesus said, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you" he was explaining the mysterious and marvelous truth that by the Spirit—the Spirit of Christ—we would have Jesus with us and within us. Jesus Himself lives in us, inseparably, unendingly, undeniably and more constantly than He dwelt as a man—with his disciples. Oh—the wonder of it all!

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27b)

When we think of glory, we think of heaven, God on his glorious throne. We can picture ourselves when we arrive there—arriving in a glorious state. Most of us would never imagine experiencing any part of glory on this earth. But although it is true—we wait for glory in heaven—glory awaits us here and now. When the Spirit of Christ is given free reign in our lives, He reigns. When and where He reigns, He brings glory. *Child of God*—do you long for Christ to be glorified in your life? So does He. *So does He. Pause to Pray.*

### The Promised Land—Life in, and through and by the Spirit.

The goal of our lesson this week will be to look at, understand, believe and appropriate the truth that it is our divine destiny to live an amazing and victorious life—now. When Jesus said that He came to give us "life abundant", He did not mean just more years to our life. He meant *more life to our years!*

This week's memory verse, 2 Peter 1:3-4, is also the anchor and basis of our lesson. We will look at how the Holy Spirit fulfills the theme of each phrase. This is a picture of our Spiritual Promised Land. May we not linger longingly at the edges. *May we enter in!*

"His divine power *has given* to us

- all things that pertain to life and godliness,
- through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,
- by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises,
- that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature,
- having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:3-4

To begin to become familiar with this verse, write it out below, pausing to think about each phrase.

**Memory verse, 2 Peter 1:3-4:**

### Weekly Memory Verses:

**Why memorize scripture?** A.W. Tozer (author of *The Pursuit of God*) said, "Our thoughts not only reveal what we are, they predict what we will become. We will soon be the sum total of our thoughts." Since this is true, we need to stock-pile in our memory banks the true things of God.

Each week, the Scripture that we have committed to memory has expanded our understanding and appreciation of the Holy Spirit.

After you have committed a verse to memory, you have it at your disposal to reflect on, seek to apply and talk to God about. You also have it available to share with someone else, which is the greatest gift we can give, the Words of life.

**Practical steps:** The use of 3X5 index cards is a simple, practical habit. Each time you write out the scripture, it helps your mind grab the words and phrases. The cards are easy to post in visible places and to carry. Enjoy the process, find pleasure in reading the verse over and over. Picture what it means, why it is important. Think about the significance of key words. When you think you have it, say it aloud without looking. Then if you missed a part, go back and practice again. Keep your cards even after the verse has become yours. Periodic review is the key to long term retention.

### Day #1 He Has Given, Will We Receive?

"His divine power *has given* to us

- **all things that pertain to life and godliness . . .**

The Old Testament book of Exodus records the story of God's marvelous deliverance of His people from slavery in Egypt. Not only were they to be free, God promised they would be full. He had plans and a place prepared for them that would exceed their wildest dreams. But triumph turned to tragedy. Because of sin and unbelief, most only heard of Canaan, the promised land. They never entered in. Instead, they wandered and then died in the wilderness. Their experience is a graphic illustration of the experience of many Christians. We too have been delivered from slavery (of sin and death). We too are supposed to progress---from the natural state, through the immature carnal state (wilderness), to the spiritual plane of "life in the heavenlies" (promised land). In Canaan, the promises of God are turned to fact---as we step into them by faith.

1. The Bible tells us that "without faith it is impossible to please God." It is also impossible to access His promises. "For who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6 NKJV) Read the following Scriptures that explain the error of unbelief. Carefully meditate on how each scripture relates to your experience. Is fear or unbelief holding you back from "laying hold" of all God has promised to give you "for life and godliness? Are you believing in "self" instead of the Spirit? Include in your thoughts and comments the relationship "belief" has to the concept of "rest".

A. (Hebrews 3:17-19 KJV) "But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? {18} And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? {19} So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

B. (Hebrews 4:1 KJV) "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

C. (Hebrews 4:9-11 NKJV) "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. {10} For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His. {11} Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience."

2. Life and godliness. The Christian life is to be full of godliness and godliness is to be full of life. Whereas, unbelief hinders us, belief enables us—excites us. If we have lived short because of lack of faith, let's leave that behind and "step into His promises" by "believing prayer". First, ask the Lord to show you seven (non-material) things that you need right now in your life and list them below. Be specific. Then ----**\*Pause to Pray\*** asking the Holy Spirit to not only provide them but to help you accept these things by faith. Also, ask Him to help you live like you have accepted them.

I need:	By His Spirit— I have:
I need:	By His Spirit— I have:
I need:	By His Spirit— I have:
I need:	By His Spirit— I have:
I need:	By His Spirit— I have:
I need:	By His Spirit— I have:
I need:	By His Spirit— I have:

**\*Practical Challenge----**Now will *you* make the conscious choice this week to live the truth that:  
 "His divine power *has given* to [you]  
 • all things that pertain to life and godliness . . .

**Memory Verse:** Write out 2 Peter 1:3-4 on an index card and practice reading it over 2 or 3 times through the day.

## Day #2 Transformed Into His Likeness

"His divine power *has given* to us

- all things that pertain to life and godliness,
- **through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue . . .**

1. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 gives us a wonderful picture of the transforming effect in our lives that occurs when the picture and "knowledge (full, personal, precise and correct) of Him" becomes clearer and clearer.

A. Open your Bible and write 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 below, circling the important words and concepts.

- B. List four-five key words or concepts from these verses and record definitions or descriptions of each. Include comments of the importance of each in our relationship with Jesus.

2. **\*Practice His Presence\*** As we learned in our lesson last week, one of the Holy Spirit's roles is to testify of and glorify Jesus. Prayerfully pause and ask the Spirit to reveal Jesus to you. Linger as He brings images of His virtue, attributes, power, grace, forgiveness. He might prompt you to turn to the Gospels or other Scriptures that clarify and define His Person.
3. Someday, the transformation will be complete and final-----ponder the glorious truth of 1 John 3:2-3. How should this truth effect our lives in the present?  
"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. {3} And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

*I Can Only Imagine* is a song that has effected many people as they reflect on that glorious moment when we see Him face to face. As you read the words of this song-----try to---imagine.

### **I Can Only Imagine**

I can only imagine, what it would be like  
When I walk, by Your side  
I can only imagine. What my eyes will see  
When Your face, is before me, I can only imagine

Surrounded by Your glory, what will my heart feel  
Will I dance before You Jesus or in awe of You be still  
Will I stand in Your presence or to my knees will I fall  
Will I sing Hallelujah, will I be able to speak at all  
I can only imagine, I can only imagine

I can only imagine, when that day comes  
And I find myself, standing in the Son  
I can only imagine, when all I will do  
Is forever, forever worship You  
I can only imagine, I can only imagine

I can only imagine, when all I will do  
Is forever, forever worship You  
I can only imagine

**Memory verse:** Fill in the blanks of 2 Peter 1:3-4:

"His divine power *has given* to us

\_\_\_\_\_ that pertain to life and godliness, through the \_\_\_\_\_ who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly \_\_\_\_\_, that through these you may be partakers of the \_\_\_\_\_, having \_\_\_\_\_ that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:3-4

### Day #3 Great and Precious Promises

His divine power *has given* to us

- all things that pertain to life and godliness,
- through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,
- **by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises . . .**

We know that Jesus is the Word—the expression and “express image” of God. In today’s lesson we will look at the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, in which are found “great and precious promises.”

<sup>1</sup>“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” The Word of God is “God breathed”. Our reception of it is “inbreathed”. Consider for a moment this amazing and intriguing statement; “God breath”. There is nothing in the universe quite like it. On top of this, the Word says about itself that it is <sup>2</sup>“living and powerful”. It should just thrill our hearts to even hold it in our hands-----let alone, know that the Holy Spirit can and will *infuse* it into our hearts, minds and souls.

#### Promises Fulfilled

One of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to “tell of things to come”. From Genesis to Revelation, the Holy Spirit has given insight into the future. The inspired Bible is the only book in the world that has specific prophecies accurately fulfilled hundreds of years after they were given.

Just to list a few, consider the following prophecies regarding Jesus:

1. Prophecy: The Messiah would be born in the city of Bethlehem, Micah 5:2.

Fulfillment: Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Luke 2:11.

2. Prophecy: The Messiah would be pierced and beaten for us, Isaiah 53:5

Fulfillment: Jesus was beaten and crucified, Matthew 27:26.

In his book, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell explains that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled just eight of the major prophecies that Jesus fulfilled are 1 in 10 to the 17<sup>th</sup> power. That is, one in 100,000,000,000,000,000.

In order to help us comprehend these staggering odds, suppose we take this many silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. Now Texas is a big state. This many silver dollars would cover the entire state two feet deep in coins.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 4:12

Now imagine that one of those silver dollars was painted red. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel anywhere in the state he wants to, and pick up one silver dollar. His chance of getting the marked silver dollar are approximately the same as a person fulfilling eight major prophecies of the Messiah by chance. Now, consider that any one man fulfilled all forty eight by chance. The odds are 10 to the 157<sup>th</sup> power. There is no practical way even to illustrate that number. Let's just say that there is about as good a chance of a tornado going through a junk yard and assembling a perfect automobile. When we look at the fulfilled prophecies in the life of Christ, the Bible becomes a very convincing book, and Jesus becomes a very convincing Messiah, and the Holy Spirit a very accurate foreteller.

3. Read the following and consider the confidence and security it gives you to trust the reliable Holy Spirit as He teaches you (as Jesus promised) to understand the Bible. Share your thoughts and insights.

“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:19-21 NKJ)

4. The words of man often tear and bruise, leaving a wound that is painful and hard to heal. The Holy Spirit applies “the Sword of the Spirit” with laser accuracy. Like a surgical instrument, the necessary internal surgery of the Word leaves a clean cut. What insights do you gain from Hebrews 4:12 (printed below)?

"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."  
Hebrews 4:12 NKJV

5. The Bible is not just a textbook, or a history book or a rule book as so many view it. It is like an ocean of vast depths and wonderfully rich life and truth. The Holy Spirit imparts these truths and makes them practical for “life and godliness”. What do you learn from 2 Timothy 3:16-17?

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,

and is profitable for doctrine (*safeguard against false teaching*),

for reproof (*conviction for change inwardly*),



for correction (*set right*),

for instruction in righteousness (*to live right*),

that the man of God may be complete (*one, all the parts of which are complete, whole*)

thoroughly equipped (*entirely set up and ready*) for every good work."

**Memory verse:** Try to write out our memory verse, 2 Peter 1:3-4. Share it with someone today.

#### Day #4 Partakers of Divine Nature

His divine power *has given* to us

- all things that pertain to life and godliness,
- through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,
- by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises,
- **that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature . . .**

The sub-title of this study is, *Getting to Know the Holy Spirit*. One of the most beautiful and irresistible displays of who He is and what He is like is seen in the fruits of the Spirit. The evidence of His presence produces results, leaves a mark and makes His character tangible. This is called "fruit".

1. Fruit can be good, but as we know, fruit can also be immature and sour or rotten to the core. Let's start by examining the fruit of living a life that is not yielded and therefore not influenced by His character. As you read these verses, it is interesting to note that envy and discord are listed alongside idolatry and drunkenness. Describe what you learn. Is there something that you feel a "tug" from the Holy Spirit regarding? Conviction is one of his jobs.

"The acts (fruit) of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; {20} idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions {21} and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV)

2. Magnanimous is a big word, which wonderfully describes the nature of the Holy Spirit of God. Magnanimous means big, large, generous, noble and charitable. The opposite of this is greedy, miserly, grasping, mercenary. So the Spirit-filled, Spirit-yielded and Spirit-led life would be one that is stretched and filled to capacity, spilling over. The use of the term "fruit" is significant. Fruit is never meant to be left on the tree. It is meant to be tasted. It is meant to give nourishment and refreshment to others. It has been said that "the branches with the most fruit bend the lowest." Open your Bible and read Galatians 5:22-23. Ponder the importance and desirability of each fruit that describes the effect of His presence in a life. Record definitions and explanations of each. Put a \* by those that you presently feel the greatest lack or need for. **\*Pause and Pray\*** that the Spirit will impart His divine power so you can be a partaker of His divine nature as you yield to Him.

- "But the fruit of the Spirit is: love,
- joy,
- peace,
- longsuffering,
- kindness,
- goodness,
- faithfulness,
- gentleness,
- self-control.

**Memory verse:** Try to write out our memory verse, 2 Peter 1:3-4. Share it with someone today.

## Day #5 Escaping Corruption

"His divine power *has given* to us

- all things that pertain to life and godliness,
- through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,
- by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises,
- that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature,
- **having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."** Peter 1:3-4

Consider the graphic description, "*corruption through lust*". Corruption is a breaking down, decaying process. Lust can certainly accomplish that in a life. Whether the lust is for sex, or money or drugs or power, it leaves a putrid deterioration. The world's value system uses people and values things. God teaches us to use things and value people.

So how do we escape the pull and drag of the temptations that surround and seek to lure us? For this, God sent His Holy Spirit-----the divine power vested in our Divine Helper.

1. To escape corrupting lust, first we have to want to escape. Then we have to make the choice to yield to the Spirit's influence. Describe what you learn and practical ways to apply the following scriptures. Then choose one that you feel is specifically needed and helpful for a particular struggle with the flesh in your life. Star it. Then underline the important principals. Then **\*Pause and Pray\*** for the Spirit to empower you to overcome.
  - A. (Galatians 5:24-26 NKJV) "And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. {25} If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. {26} Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."
  - B. (Romans 8:5-6 NKJV) "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."
  - C. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJV) "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? {20} For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."
  - D. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 NKJV) "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, {10} nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. {11} And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."
2. As we become free from the bondage of sin, are we to disdain and resent those who fall or are weak? Is that spiritual righteousness?
  - A. Read Galatians 6:1 and share what you learn. "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."
  - B. Is there someone you know who might need a gentle hand or encouragement on the road to restoration? Will you **\*Pause and Pray\*** for them right now? Will you pray for an opportunity, as the Spirit leads, to obey the instruction given in Galatians 6:1?

**Memory verse:** Write out our verse with the scripture address.



# The Wonderful Spirit of God

## Getting to Know the Holy Spirit

*"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Ephesians 5:18-19 NKJV)*

<sup>1</sup>"Each one of us has to, sooner or later, to decide what kind of Christian life we shall live. We are faced with two alternatives. On the one hand a life of self-pleasing, self-choosing, self-indulgence; a life in which Christ has place, or even prominence, but not pre-eminence. On the other hand a life absolutely yielded to Christ, where His will alone is sought and obeyed." J. Oswald Sanders

If our hearts cry, "yes, I am willing!", then the Spirit says, "yes, I'll make you able". <sup>2</sup>"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord of hosts."

### Day #1 Giving of Gifts

*"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant."*  
1 Corinthians 12:1 NKJV

<sup>1</sup>Pastor Chuck Smith states, "I do not know of any subject concerning which there is greater ignorance in the church today than the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This ignorance occurs on both sides of the issue. On one side, some people lack the understanding that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are available for the church today. On the other side, some who revel in these gifts display a strong lack of knowledge concerning their proper scriptural exercise."

The word "ignorance" informs us that some have lack of knowledge. But it is interesting to note that the base word of ignorance is "ignore." May we not be *willingly* ignorant when it comes to this important and beneficial topic.

1. There are three sections of scripture that are classically considered to be a description of spiritual gifts. Many teachers and scholars do not believe these lists to be exhaustive. There may be one called "zealous enthusiasm", or that of "vision for the big goals of God", or "attention to details". Exodus 31:3 mentions the Spirit granting "workmanship" ability. Colossians 3:16 refers to "spiritual song making." These would also be helpful gifts in the work of God. The important goal of the following exercise is not to pigeonhole gifts or the "gifted," but to *unwrap* the gifts and use them to the fullest. We need to view them, not as natural endowments and skills, but as spiritual endowments. Therefore, **\*Pause and Pray\*** asking the Holy Spirit to give you enlightenment and excitement regarding this often neglected part of your heritage in Christ. Tangible gifts give us joy—how much more---the gift of God's Spirit  
.☺

- A. Read the texts in the following boxes. As you look at and list the various gifts, use a highlighter or crayon to mark the ones you have witnessed in operation---green. The ones you feel are lacking and not in current operation in your Christian atmosphere---mark yellow. The ones you feel drawn to and personally would like to have---color in pink. The

<sup>1</sup> Christ Indwelling and Enthroned, p. 55

<sup>2</sup> Zec. 4:6

ones you feel you have seen misused---color red. The ones you have questions about---underline.

B. Then think about each gift. Have you seen any of them used by and through the life of another believer? If so, write their name beside the gift. Maybe they do not fully realize that God is using them in this way. Would you make it a goal this week to affirm and confirm to them that you have been blessed to see this in their life?

C. Is there a gift that you feel (or hope) you have been given? Put a star by that gift.

(Romans 12:6-8,13 NKJV)

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

{7} or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

{8} he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."

(Romans 12:13 KJV) "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality."

Make a list of the spiritual gifts mentioned:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

(1 Corinthians 12:7-10 KJV)

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

{9} To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

{10} To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."

Make a list of the spiritual gifts mentioned:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

(Ephesians 4:7,11,12 NKJV)

"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

{11} And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

{12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of

Make a list of the spiritual gifts mentioned:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Christ . . ."

5.

2. "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant . . ." 1 Corinthians 12:1 NKJV. As you have listed, sorted and pondered the gifts, what new understanding have you gained?

**Memory verse:** *"be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord," (Ephesians 5:18b-19)*

## Day #2 The What—Why—How of Spiritual Gifts

Have you ever unwrapped a package and wondered what it is and how it is to be used? Have you ever read the package and it said, "some assembly required," but you did not have the tools? How about the phrase, "batteries *not* included"? These presents are often set aside, misused or thrown away. But if the original manufacturer offered personal technical support, tools and power, the situation would change. For this---God sends the Guide, the Helper, the Teacher, the Power, the Holy Spirit of God.

In today's study we will seek to understand the value, purpose and use of spiritual gifts. To do this, we will look at the information given in the context of the three sections of scripture referred to in Day #1.

1. Open your Bible and read 1 Corinthians 12 thoughtfully and carefully. Circle or underline key statements. You might want to look up the meaning of a few words that draw your interest. As we look at this chapter, we see a picture of unity without "cookie cutter" conformity. There is freedom to be unique---as God made you.

- A. Since differences can be divisive, what do you need to remember that will protect you from friction, competition and alienation from others in the body of Christ?

- B. Read verses 7 and 11 again.

(1 Corinthians 12:7 NKJV) "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all . . ."	(1 Corinthians 12:11 NKJV) "But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills."
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- a. According to these verses, is there *any* Christian who is not given a spiritual gift (divine endowment)? Be careful that your answer is not just mental agreement. If your answer is no---not one person is excluded---this would mean you---really. If you doubt this, you doubt the Word of God. **\*Pause for Prayer\***. Then express your thoughts.
- b. Spiritual gifts are not to be displayed as trophies and awards for excellence in Christian living. What is the real purpose? Explain the importance of viewing this correctly.

- c. We are encouraged to “desire the best gifts.” But ultimately *who* decides what endowment is given? Why do you think this is true and important do know?
  
2. Jesus told the parable of the talents (resources) in Matthew 25:14-29 and Luke 19:12-26. Review these stories. In Matthew the gifts were distributed in different amounts. In Luke, each was given the same. How do you think the principles of these parables apply to the topic of gifts? What insight do you gain? **Prayerfully** consider your answer and personalize your response.
  
3. You *are* a member of the body of Christ. The most important issue is not for you to determine whether you are an eye or a toe. The important truth is that you *need* others. Others *need* you. Do you believe that? Do you live like you do? What happens when you (we) don't?
  
4. Romans 12:10-12 tells us the attitude with which gifts are to be exercised. This description lifts the use, to a higher level of beauty and satisfaction in our service.  
*"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer . . ."*  
 Many people do not realize that 1 Corinthians 13 was also written in connection with the use of spiritual gifts. Read it carefully. What do you learn? What do you want to and need to apply?

**Memory verse:** *"Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord . . ."* (Ephesians 5:18-19 NKJV)

### Day #3 Descriptions and Explanations of Gifts

1. Ephesians 4:11-14 gives us information regarding the reasons that God supplies specific gifts within the Church. State several facts, including why these are needed for Christians living in the world today.

(Ephesians 4:11-14 NKJV) "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, {13} till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; {14} that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,"



2. **Teaching:** One may have their teaching credential and a seminary degree and yet not have the spiritual gift of teaching. This is a supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the Word of God in a way that involves the hearer and leads to obedience. The use is not limited to a formal pulpit ministry. Why is it important and where else can it be used besides the formal church setting?

3. **Prophecy:** The gift of Prophecy is to speak under inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. Prophecy is not just foretelling the future, it is also *forth-telling* the Word of the Lord. This gift is often displayed when the Word of God is being preached or taught. 1 Corinthians 14:3 describes a valuable function, "But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men." This gift is to be carefully and prayerfully exercised, but according to the New Testament-----*it is to be exercised*.

On the day of Pentecost, immediately after being filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter stood and explained to those who had gathered that this was a fulfillment of prophecy given in the book of Joel. As you read these words, describe what you learn.

*"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy."*  
(Acts 2:17-18 NIV)

5. Paul encouraged believers to covet this gift, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." (1 Corinthians 14:1) Why? Let's look at the three benefits mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14:3. Read the definitions of each. State the reasons each are important in the body of Christ right now.
  - A. Edification (strengthening): architecture and structure are terms used in the definition of this word. Acts 20:32 tells us that "the word of His grace" is "able to build you up." Truth is like a building block-----each piece adds to our foundation, and frames our security in Christ.
  - B. Exhortation (encouragement): imploration, entreaty. There is a sense of urgency to apply God's truths, making them real and useful in our lives. <sup>iii</sup>"Be doers and not just hearers."
  - C. Comfort: to relate near, console. Prophecy reminds us that God reigns on an eternal throne, this world and all of its troubles are just temporary---they are <sup>iii</sup>"passing away." Prophecy reminds us that His throne is called <sup>iv</sup>"the throne of grace," from which we receive mercy and grace to help.

3. All prophecies are to be judged.
  1. Does the prophecy line up with the already revealed Word of God?
  2. Does it perform the functions of 1 Corinthians 14:3?
  3. Does it testify of and / or glorify Jesus Christ?
  4. Is it spoken in a manner that is orderly (1 Corinthians 14:29-33)?
  5. If the prophecy is predictive, does it come true?

So---why---since prophecy is such a wonderful, holy and beneficial gift---are we so afraid of it? The reason is, unfortunately, some pretend to use it for unholy purposes. False motives are the distinguishing marks of false prophets with false messages. As with the use of all spiritual gifts, pure motives are also a distinguishing mark. *Be wise!* It is not spiritual to be naive and undiscerning. Read the following scriptures carefully. Circle important descriptive words or concepts. Think about the warnings described. State what you learn.

- A. (Matthew 7:15-17 KJV) "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves.
  
- B. (2 Peter 2:1-3 NKJV) "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. {2} And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. {3} By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber."
  
- C. A false prophet will speak only what people want to hear, not what they need to hear as Jeremiah describes (Lamentations 2:14 NIV), "The visions of your prophets were false and worthless; they did not expose your sin to ward off your captivity. The oracles they gave you were false and misleading."

**The gift of tongues:** This gift will not be studied in this lesson. **Optional\*** If you are interested in studying this topic you might read 1 Corinthians 12-14. By writing down each statement regarding tongues and considering what is said, you will get a fairly comprehensive picture. It is also interesting to look up and record each time that believers spoke in tongues in the book of Acts (Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6). Many people believe that Romans 8:26 refers to the operation of this gift.

**The gifts of healing and miracles:** Undoubtedly any manifestation of these gifts would truly be a "gift," not just to and through the instrument, but to the one who received it. **Optional\*** Because both have misuse and misunderstanding surrounding them, it would be beneficial to look at the explanation given by Pastor Chuck Smith in his book *Living Water*.

**Memory verse:** "Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit, speaking to one another \_\_\_\_\_ and spiritual songs, singing and making melody \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord." (Ephesians 5:18-19)

## Day #4      Service Gifts

**Serving (Helps):** The Spirit given ability to serve, especially the body of Christ, in any supporting role. This assistance is usually the fulfillment of physical tasks, but can be spiritual tasks as well. There is spiritual wisdom given to *see the need* along with understanding of how and when to meet it. Joy, diligence and efficiency are woven as one serves with the gift of “Helps.”

**Hospitality:** This is not merely the ability to entertain guests. This gift has little to do with fine china and gourmet food. Spiritual hospitality welcomes, making one feel wanted. Food and shelter are provided to those in need without causing them to feel helpless. It is interesting to note that the root word of hospitality is *hospital*. Even those who have rich houses and plenty to eat can feel like they are never at home. “God has made us accepted in the Beloved. The gift of “Hospitality” causes us to experience this blessed truth.

**Giving:** “He who gives, with liberality.” This gift endows one with an ever replenished, deep pocket and an abundant heart to match. Secret giving with no ulterior motive is a trademark of the operation of spiritual giving. Wisdom and discretion assures that the gift will be beneficial and enabling, not causing a dependency that is unhealthy or crippling. Joy is a lasting byproduct to both the vessel and recipient of “Giving.”

**Administration:** <sup>vi</sup>“*The Holy Spirit will not delegate His power or authority to secular or carnal hands.*” The natural talent of administration is often ridged. The spiritual gift of administration adds structure and organization but is also pliable and flowing. The Spirit gives ability to preside, govern, plan and facilitate with wisdom, example, humility, gentle firmness, confidence and efficiency. The leader with this gift becomes “the servant of all.” Those working alongside are able to give their best because the directives are fair, clearly defined and do-able. Wise delegation brings others into service, helps them discover their gifts and allows them the blessings of serving the King.

**Leadership:** There is no such thing as a *self-made* spiritual leader. He or she is able to influence others spiritually because they, themselves, are influence by the Spirit. J. Oswald Saunders states: <sup>vii</sup>“Spiritual leadership is the blending of natural and spiritual qualities. Even the natural qualities are not self-produced but God-given, and they therefore reach their highest effectiveness when employed in the service of God and for His glory.” <sup>viii</sup>A.W. Tozer defines this: “A true and safe leader is likely to be one who has no desire to lead, but is forced into a position of leadership by inward pressure of the Holy Spirit and the press of external situation.” Rest assured, whom God calls, He anoints, whom He anoints, He equips, whom He equips, He grants authority in His name. *A godly leader knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.* Others follow.

### Discovering Spiritual Gifts

Do you long to be actively, effectively and mightily used in the family of God and for His kingdom? The answer is not “holy sweat.” Again, prayerfully apply the principals that Jesus gave us in Luke 11.

- "And I say unto you, Ask, and it *shall be given* you;
- seek, and ye *shall find*;
- knock, and it *shall be opened* unto you.

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

1. Ask the Lord to show you the way that He has chosen to give you divine ability. Often He reveals this by a desire, a stir, an interest---a "holy tug.". As you read the definitions of gifts, is there one that makes your heart sing to think about it? Do you sense a urgent need for it?
2. Seek to test the waters. Step into opportunities and get your feet wet. It is better to try and find out that something is not a fit than to spiritually just *sit on the bench* and watch others. Ask the Lord for a way, place and time to serve, even in a small way this week. It is often in the midst of service that He enables.
3. Don't give up. Just because a door seems shut doesn't mean it is closed forever. Knock again if the Lord seems to prompt your heart. Or look around and see if there is another door you have not considered.

Memory verse: Write out your verse. Try to share it with someone today.

## Day #5 Spiritual Warfare

A discussion of the realm and working of the Holy Spirit would not be complete without acknowledging the fact that there is an unholy spirit at work in the world.

*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."*  
(Ephesians 6:12 KJV)

1. God has prepared us, equipped us, empowered us to stand and not fall, fail or fear the forces if Satan . Read the following scriptures with sober interest. Underline, highlight and circle important concepts. Describe how you would apply what you learn in the types of spiritual warfare you face in your life.

(2 Corinthians 10:3-5 KJV)

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

{4} (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

{5} Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ . . ."

a. What gives you encouragement?

b. What do you need to do for victory?

c. Give a practical example of how this can be applied.

(James 4:7-8 KJV)

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

{8} Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."

a. What gives you encouragement?

b. What do you need to do for victory?

c. Give a practical example of how this can be applied.

(Ephesians 4:26-31 NKJV) ""Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, {27} nor give place to the devil. {28} Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. {29} Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. {30} And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. {31} Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice."

- a. What gives you encouragement?
- b. What do you need to do for victory?
- c. Give a practical example of how this can be applied.

(1 John 4:3-4 KJV)  
"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.  
{4} Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."

- a. What gives you encouragement?
- b. What do you need to do for victory?
- c. Give a practical example of how this can be applied.

(Ephesians 6:11, 14-18 KJV)  
"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.  
..... Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;  
{15} And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; {16} Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.  
{17} And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the **Spirit**, which is the word of God:  
{18} Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the **Spirit**, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints . . ."

- a. What gives you encouragement?
- b. What do you need to do for victory?
- c. Give practical examples of how this can be applied.

\*Notice that the sword of the spirit (the Word of God) is the only offensive weapon listed. For a sword to be useful and effective in battle, you must know how to use it, the blade must be polished and sharp. Even Jesus used the Word of God to combat Satan when tempted.

**Quote\*** “When you're faced with a busy day, save precious time by skipping your devotions.”  
*Signed, Satan*

**Memory verses:** Try to write out the verses from all five lessons

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**\*Pause to Ponder\***

Take a few moments before the Lord and review the things you have learned about The Wonderful Spirit of God.

Do you feel that you have gotten to know the Spirit of God in a closer personal way?

Have you consciously chosen to trust Him?

Have you seen a difference in your anxiety level as you sense His presence and power?

Have you experienced fruit in your life in a fresh new way?

Are you excited to continue to seek and yield and be used by Him?

Will you ask the Lord to give you opportunity to share with someone else?

Will you ask for and expect Him to fill you and refill you?

**\*Pause to Pray\***

- Oh, Breath of Heaven, Spirit of the Living God.....*fall afresh on me.*
- Spirit of the Living God.....*fall afresh on me.*
- Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.....
- Spirit of the Living God.....*fall afresh on me.*

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<sup>i</sup> Living Water, p. 89

<sup>ii</sup> James 1:22a

<sup>iii</sup> 1 John 2:17

<sup>iv</sup> Hebrews 4:16

<sup>v</sup> Ephesians 1:6 NKJV

<sup>vi</sup> <sup>vi</sup> Spiritual Leadership, J. Oswald Sanders, p. 98

<sup>vii</sup> Spiritual Leadership, J. Oswald Sanders

<sup>viii</sup> A.W. Tozer, in the Reaper, February 1962, p.