

Help in Prayer



The Holy Spirit in You (Part 7)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue with our theme, "The Holy Spirit in You."

I've explained that when Jesus had completed His ministry on earth, there was an exchange of divine persons. First, Jesus Himself returned to heaven; then, from heaven He sent the Holy Spirit to take His place with the disciples on earth. This exchange was completed on the day of Pentecost.

The Holy Spirit came to the disciples to be their paraclete and we've looked a various ways of translating that word: Comforter, Counselor, Helper. Also, Jesus Himself came to the disciples in the Holy Spirit but no longer limited by space and time.

I've been sharing with you certain specific ways in which the Holy Spirit helps us. I've said that He is the revelator and interpreter of God's Word and that is God's Word both written and personal; God's Word, the Bible and God's Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit's function is to reveal and interpret both to us.

Secondly, I've said that the Holy Spirit lifts us onto a supernatural plane of living and I mentioned in particular yesterday the supernatural manifested in miracles and in supernatural guidance. Guidance and direction exceeded anything that the people being guided could ever have achieved by natural reasoning, that locked them into the future plans of God for many centuries ahead.

Today I'm going to speak about another vitally important way in which the Holy Spirit helps us and that is in our prayers. In Romans 8:14, Paul describes our need of the Holy Spirit's guidance to lead the Christian life. He says:

> "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

You see, in order to become a Christian, you have to be born of the Spirit of God. But in order to live like a Christian after you've been born and in order to come to maturity, you have to be led continually by the Spirit of God. The verbal form that Paul uses there is a continuing present. "For all who are being [continually] led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of

God." No longer little babies, but mature sons and daughters.

Further on in Romans 8:26-27, Paul applies this principle of being led by the Holy Spirit particularly to our prayer life. He emphasizes the necessity of the guidance of the Holy Spirit to pray aright. This is what he says:

> "And in the same way the Spirit [capital 's,' the Holy Spirit] also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself [and there the personality of the Holy Spirit is emphasized, the Spirit Himself] intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the heart knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

Paul speaks there about a weakness, a weakness that we all have. It's not a physical weakness, it's a kind of weakness of our mind and understanding, and it's expressed in this way: that we don't know what to pray for and we don't know how to pray.

I have often challenged large congregations and asked anybody who always knew what to pray for and how to pray for it to raise his hand so that we might recognize them, and never once has anybody dared to raise his hand on that challenge. So it is a fact and I think we're all honest enough to acknowledge it, that when we want to pray, many times we don't know what to pray for. And sometimes even if we think we know what to pray for, we don't know how to pray for it. Now Paul calls that our "weakness." But he says God sends the Holy Spirit to help us in that weakness, to help us to know what to pray for and to know how to pray for it. And in a certain sense, Paul's language suggests that the Holy Spirit moves in and Himself at times does the praying through us.

I do myself believe that's the key to effective praying. It's learning how to be so related to the Holy Spirit that you can turn over to the Holy Spirit and let Him guide you, direct you, inspire you and strengthen you and, many times actually pray through you.

Now the New Testament reveals many ways in which the Holy Spirit can help us. It's not limited just to one way and I'm going to just outline a few ways today.

The first way that I will mention is one that is actually referred to in those verses in Romans 8:26-27. Paul says:

> "...the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words."

I would call that intercession which is, I think, one of the high points of the Christian life, knowing how to intercede. And he speaks about "groanings to deep for words." What always grips me about that passage is that there are things that we need to pray about that are too deep for words. We are poor little finite limited minds who don't have the words to pray what needs to be prayed. So one of the ways the Holy Spirit comes to our help is to pray through us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

Now that I believe is a very sacred experience. To me, it's spiritual travail that leads to spiritual birth. I'd just like to quote two passages of Scripture relating to that. Isaiah 66:8, the prophet says:

> "As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons."

I don't believe there's any real spiritual reproduction in the church without spiritual travail in prayer. It's when Zion travails that she brings forth her sons.

And Paul writes to the Galatian believers in Galatians 4:19, and he says this:

> "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you..."

Paul had preached to those people. They'd been converted. But for them to become what they needed to be, Paul recognized that it took more than preaching, it took intercessory prayer. And he describes that intercessory prayer as being "in the pains of childbirth," "groanings too deep for words."

A second way in which the Holy Spirit helps us in prayer is that He illuminates our minds. Now He doesn't actually pray through us in this way but He shows us in our minds what we need to pray for and how we need to pray for it.

Let me give you two passages from the epistles that speak about the work of the Holy Spirit in our minds. Romans 12:2, Paul says:

> "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good

> and acceptable and perfect."

You see, it's only a renewed mind that can find out God's will even in the matter of prayer. And in Ephesians 4:23, Paul writes to the Ephesians and says:

> "...that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind."

So, the renewing of our minds is done by the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit moves in and reprograms our minds, then our minds are renewed and we begin to understand the will of God and we begin to know how to pray according to the will of God. So that's another way the Holy Spirit helps us by renewing our minds: illuminating and revealing to us how to pray.

And then there's another way in which the Holy Spirit helps us. He puts the right words in our mouths, unexpected words. Whenever I talk about this, I always think of an incident when my first wife and I were in Denmark, which was her native country, at the end of October. We were about to leave the next day for Britain and we were going to spend the whole month of November in Britain. Now I'm British and I know November in Britain is a gloomy, misty, cold foggy sort of month. And as we prayed the day before we left for Britain from Denmark—we always prayed together each morning—I heard my wife Lydia say, "Give us fine weather all the time we're in Britain!" And I almost fell out of the bed—we were sitting up in bed praying. I said to her afterwards, "Do you know what you prayed?" She said, "No, I don't remember!" That was sure proof to me it was the Holy Spirit. "Well," I said, "you prayed for God to give us fine weather all the time we're in Britain and you know what Britain is like in November." Well, she just shrugged her shoulders. I want to tell you that we spent the whole month of November in Britain. There wasn't one cold, miserable, wet day. It was like a good spring.

When we left at the end of November, I said to the people who saw us off at the airport, "Look out. Because when we leave the weather's going to change!" And, sure enough, it did! But you see, that was a prayer that the Holy Spirit just put in Lydia's mouth. It was what the Lord wanted prayed for us at that time.

Another way in which the Holy Spirit helps us in prayer and one that's mentioned many times in the New Testament is that the Holy Spirit gives us a new language, an unknown language, one that our mind does not know. Some people today speak about this as a prayer language. Let me show you what Paul says about this in 1 Corinthians 14. In verse 2 he says:

> "For anyone who speaks in a tongue [that's an unknown tongue] does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit."

And in verse 4 of that same chapter he says:

> "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself..."

So this kind of prayer serves three basic functions. First of all, when we pray in an unknown tongue, we're not speaking to men, we're speaking to God. To me, that's a tremendous privilege in itself. Secondly, we're speaking things our minds don't understand, we're speaking mysteries, we're sharing God's secrets. Thirdly, as we do it, we're edifying ourselves, we're building ourselves up.

Further on in the same chapter of 1 Corinthians 14:14, Paul says:

> "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful."

Now there's a situation where the Holy Spirit doesn't illuminate our mind but He simply gives us a new language and prays through us in that language.

Now, we mustn't use one form of prayer to the exclusion of the other. Paul says very clearly, "I will pray with my spirit but I also will pray with my mind." There are both kinds of prayer possible.

So you see in that, when we let the Holy Spirit in and yield to Him and let Him work in us according to Scripture, there's a tremendous richness and variety in our prayer life. And that's what God wants for each one of us.

Well, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be explaining how the Holy Spirit imparts supernatural life and health to our physical bodies.

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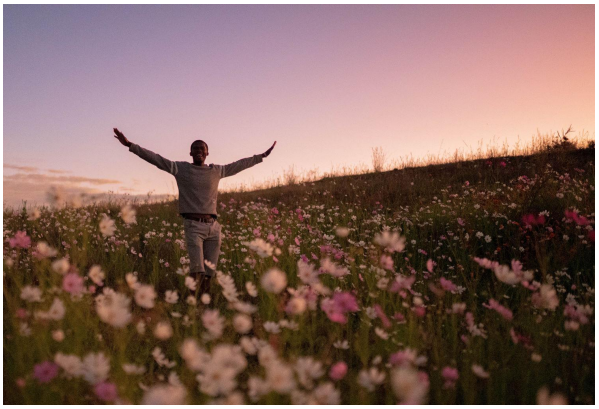

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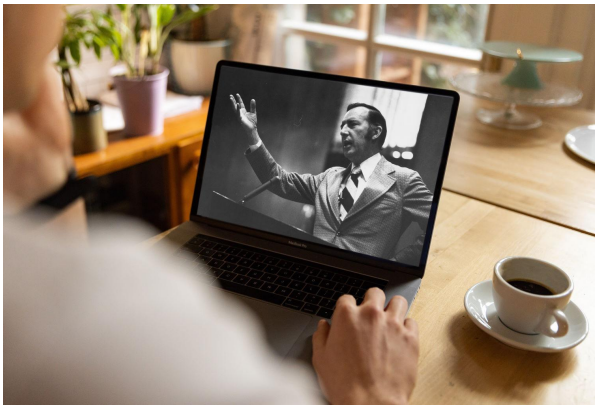

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