

Spirit-Filled Praying

(Praying in the Holy Spirit)

INTRODUCTION: *One of the most important tasks of living life in the power of the Holy Spirit is prayer. I could almost say that it is the most important thing, because, to quote Armin Gesswein, "Until we have prayed we can do nothing." However, living by the Holy Spirit includes other significant activities such as yielding to His will every moment, etc. Nonetheless, prayer IS the work of the Church, and praying in the Holy Spirit is the only assurance we have of prayer being answered. Gesswein continues, "after we have prayed there is nothing we cannot do!" So what is praying in the Spirit?*

I. We Ought Always to Pray and Not to Give Up (Luke 18:1)

- A. According to Jesus, prayer should have at least two components
 1. always (Paul writes, "Pray without ceasing..." I Thess 5:17). Prayer should be our first impulse, our last amen, and everything in between
 2. persistent—we must be passionate and relentless in pursuing God for the things we believe He wants to do
- B. But praying in our own strength (the flesh) for our own wants (James 4:2-3) is as fruitless as living by the law and walking in the flesh. How do we pray in the Spirit?
- C. Effective prayer is the passionate plea for God to accomplish His will on earth as it is in heaven, and it is communicated to us and through us by His Spirit

II. What Spirit-filled Praying, or Praying in the Spirit is Not

- A. It is sometimes helpful to define a thing by describing what it is not. This is particularly true of praying in the Spirit.
- B. Praying in the Spirit is not praying in tongues
 1. Praying in tongues (the genuine gift) IS praying in the Spirit, but the reverse of the statement is not true. One cannot genuinely pray in tongues without being led by the Holy Spirit, but praying in the Spirit includes ever so much more, including, and especially, praying with understanding of God's will and in cooperation with God
 2. Praying in tongues is a spiritual gift (gift of the Holy Spirit) that involves praying with our own spirit, by-passing the understanding of our mind
- C. Praying in the Spirit is not expressing our own desires and wants, however passionately. We are invited to make all of our needs and wants known to God, and to lay all our burdens at His feet. This, however, is praying with our own hearts and minds concerning the things we want, which God is not obligated to give. It is often the beginning place for Spirit-filled praying as we listen to God speak to our needs and His desires for us

III. What Spirit-filled Praying Is

- A. It is prayer guided by the Holy Spirit
 1. It may be with the conscious mind inspired by God (Eph 6:18-20, Jude 20)
 2. It may be without any words at all (Rom 8:26-27)
 3. It may arise from Scripture applied by the Holy Spirit (I John 5:14)
 4. It may be with the spiritual gift of another language (I Cor 12:1-11)
- B. It is prayer in accordance with the revealed will of God (Matt 6:10), guided by the Spirit and boldly asked in the authority of Jesus Name (John 14-16)

CONCLUSION: Spirit-filled praying takes time; time waiting on God. Sometimes it is a few minutes, other times it may be a few years. It is praying that is faith-filled and bold because God has revealed His will in the matter. It is prayer that is in agreement with other like-minded believers (Matt 18:19; Acts 2:1) and in agreement with God (John 11:41-42). It is prayer without ceasing (I Thess 5:17; Eph 6:18; Luke 18:1). Praying in the Spirit is the lifeline of communion and power with the Lord.