

## Seeking God's Spirit

### DAY 7—PRAYING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

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**“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:18, NKJV).**

#### Testimony

“Christ, our Mediator, and the Holy Spirit are constantly interceding in man’s behalf, but the Spirit pleads not for us as does Christ who presents His blood, shed from the foundation of the world; the Spirit works upon our hearts, drawing out prayers and penitence, praise and thanksgiving. The gratitude which flows from our lips is the result of the Spirit striking the cords of the soul in holy memories, awakening the music of the heart” (Ellen White, *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 1077-78).

Prayer is challenging. We cannot see God, and most of us seldom, if ever, hear God. We cannot touch Him, and it sometimes seems like answers are hard to come by. We also have many questions about how prayer works, or why it doesn’t seem to work.

I remember praying as a young man and growing frustrated. I would often get drowsy (praying with head bowed and eyes closed), and sometimes my mind wandered to a list of things I needed to do instead of talking with the Lord. Songs like “Sweet Hour of Prayer” were a mystery to me. “How can anyone pray for an hour? I can hardly pray for 15 minutes. In fact, one survey shows that the average time pastors spend in prayer is around 7-10 minutes each day! I felt guilty. Of all things that a pastor should be committed to, prayer is the most important of all.

While thoroughly studying the subject of the Holy Spirit, I came across this text: “And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don’t know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words” (Romans 8:26, NLT). I did not fully understand this verse at the time, but it was clear the Holy Spirit would help me with prayer. That one thought alone began to transform my prayer life. God had promised to help me pray, so I began to claim that promise with all my heart. When I got drowsy, I claimed the promise. When my mind wandered, I claimed the promise. Gradually the quality of my prayers and the quantity of time I spent in prayer improved. Also, as I spent more time in prayer, personal challenges improved or went away, and miracles began to happen. I can’t explain why, but it seems to be true: the time spent in prayer is just as important as the quality of what we say.

Even though prayer is still a challenge sometimes, I find that the time goes by more quickly, and I don’t have trouble with sleepiness or mental wandering. I know God hears my prayers, and I know He will answer in His own good time and way. So, biblically speaking, to pray in the Spirit means to put forth human effort to improve our time in prayer while trusting the Holy Spirit to inspire and empower us.

#### Some practical ideas to improve your prayer life:

- Pray through scripture. Read a text and pray to the Lord about what you just read.
- Use music. The hymnal and other songbooks contain many prayers. Use those prayers to help you know what you want to say. Singing is another form of praying.
- Pray in a place that has fresh air and is free from distractions.

- Journal your prayers. Many people enjoy writing out their prayers and find that it helps them clarify thoughts and express themselves more thoroughly.
- Find a prayer partner you can pray with in person or over the phone.
- Attend prayer meetings (at church or in people's homes) or start a prayer meeting.
- Make a list of the things you need to talk with God about.

### **Bible Texts to Pray About**

- Jude 20—We build up our faith by praying in the Holy Spirit.
- Ephesians 6:18—Pray in the Spirit with all kinds of prayer and requests.
- Luke 6:12—Jesus continued all night in prayer.
- Luke 11:11-13—The Holy Spirit comes to us in answer to prayer.
- 1 Timothy 2:1—Prayer is the most important thing we can do.
- Luke 22:43—Divine help will strengthen our prayers, as it did for Jesus.
- Genesis 32:24—Jacob wrestled with God. Sometimes prayer seems like hard work.
- Luke 18:1—We will be blessed if we persist in prayer without losing heart.
- Zechariah 12:10—The Spirit of grace and prayer will be poured out on us and on our families.

### **Suggested Prayers**

- Dear Father, make me a person of prayer and use me to bless the people in my life. Please pour out Your Holy Spirit on me and give me strength.
- Lord, please rebuke Satan and the evil spirits that want to keep me in bondage. Give me victory over my sins through the power of Your blood.
- Please save our children and grandchildren. Send every angel heaven can spare to guide them into everlasting life. Break Satan's power over them, help them see Your goodness, and give them a spirit of repentance.
- Bless our pastors, teachers, evangelists, and members all over the world with a spirit of prayer. May the united voice of Your people rise up to heaven in a mighty chorus of praise and intercession.
- Lord, we pray for Your protection for vulnerable children and teens. We ask You to guard them from those who seek to exploit them.
- We ask You to raise up urban missionaries to plant churches for the 806 people groups in the 20 countries of Inter-European Division.
- Please raise up an army of workers to plant churches for the 948 people groups in the 38 countries of Inter-American Division.
- Lord, please guide church decisions at the 2020 General Conference Session. May the delegates, leaders, and visitors be filled with a spirit of revival and love.
- We uplift the seven names we've written down on our cards. Bring these people close to You.
- Local Prayer Requests:

### **Suggested Songs**

Sweet Hour of Prayer (Hymn #478); Prayer is the Key to Heaven; O Holy Dove of God Descending (Hymn #270); When You Pray; Every Praise; Showers of Blessing (Hymn #195).