

LESSON 7 Let the Holy Spirit Help You

“Oh, his poor feet, Lord, his poor feet!” prayed Mrs. Dean. She was shocked at her own prayer. Why? Because she had just read the report that the man she was praying for, Victor Plymire, had been killed while taking the message of Jesus into the interior of Tibet.

How foolish Mrs. Dean felt praying for a dead man’s feet! Yet she knew so strongly that she should. What she did not know was that report was wrong. Victor was not dead. He was somewhere on a snow-covered trail, high in the Himalayan mountains, with both feet partially frozen.

Except for a miracle, Victor was likely to die of gangrene infection before he could reach civilization. But the Lord had another plan. Through His Spirit, He told Mrs. Dean, a woman who lived on the other side of the world, to pray for Victor. She obeyed, the miracle happened, and Victor was healed.

Other people have had the same kind of experience that Mrs. Dean had. The Holy Spirit has directed their prayers, and wonderful things have happened. The Holy Spirit has many ways of helping us when we pray!

The Plan

- A. Listen to the Spirit's Voice
- B. Feel What the Spirit Feels
- C. Let the Spirit Pray Through You
- D. Act in the Spirit's Power

The Goals

- 1. Identify the work of the Holy Spirit in our prayers.
- 2. Describe how feelings enter into our prayers.
- 3. Explain what it means to pray in the Spirit.
- 4. Discuss the importance of putting the Spirit's power into practice.

A. LISTEN TO THE SPIRIT'S VOICE

Goal 1. Identify the work of the Holy Spirit in our prayers.

We have already talked about listening to God when we pray. It is the Holy Spirit who speaks to us in this two-way conversation as we pray and read the Bible. He sometimes shows us things in our lives that do not please God. He helps us confess them to God and ask His forgiveness. Then He gives us peace and assurance that God has forgiven us. Our lives are changed as we listen to the Holy Spirit and let Him help us day by day.

Romans 8:26–27 “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”

THE SPIRIT HELPS US PRAY

Romans 8:26–27

Our Problem	His Help
Lack of Prayer	Encourages Us to Pray
Little Faith	Gives Us Faith
Ignorance of the Need	Tells Us What to Pray For
Ignorance of God’s Will	Prays for Us in God’s Will
Satanic Opposition	Gives Us Victory
Limitation of Our Speech	Prays Through Us

Thank God that the Holy Spirit helps us pray! He has come to live in us, give us a new nature, guide us, and help us worship and serve God. Jesus said:

John 4:24 “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

As the Spirit leads us, we experience the joy of knowing God as our Father.

Romans 8:14–17 “Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”

The Holy Spirit helps us to understand God’s Word and brings to our mind the truths we need.

John 14:26 “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

Isaiah 11:2 “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.”

The teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit come most often through the Bible. So meditate on God’s Word as you read.

Memorize verses and repeat them throughout the day. Take a promise in the morning and keep it in your mind during the day. Let the Word become a part of you. The Holy Spirit can then bring the right words to your memory and apply them to your circumstances when He wants to guide or encourage you. He will also use the Word to make your faith grow, and you will see greater answers to prayer.

Application

- 1** You may notice that we are reviewing in this last lesson of the course some truths that we have already studied. This is an important part of thorough learning. Go back to Lesson 3 and read it again. Read what you have written in your notebook for that lesson.
 - 2** Write briefly in your notebook several things that the Holy Spirit has told you to pray about or to do since you began studying this course. What were the results?
 - 3** Review Lesson 4. Are you using the Word as suggested? How is this helping you?
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B. FEEL WHAT THE SPIRIT FEELS

Goal 2. Describe how feelings enter into our prayers.

We have talked about concern for those who are lost and about feeling other people. This comes from the love that God has for them. His Spirit in us loves people and causes us to love them too. The more we let Him have His way in our lives, the more His love will fill us.

Romans 5:5 “Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”

The strong compassion of the Holy Spirit may sometimes make the tears flow as we pray for people, but at other times the joy of the Holy Spirit will cause us to rejoice and praise God.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

2 Thessalonians 1:3 “We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.”

Philippians 1:3–4 “I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy.”

Romans 12:15 “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”

We have talked about attitudes in prayer. May the Holy Spirit so enter into every part of us that we will feel what He feels: a deep hatred of sin, a longing to please God in all we do, an urgent desire to help others be free from sin and its results, desire for Jesus to come back to earth and set up His kingdom, love for God and for people, sincerity and earnestness in our prayers, joy in communion with the Father, assurance that He will answer, and willingness to do whatever He tells us to do.

Application

- 4** Review Lesson 1, asking the Holy Spirit to take you to a deeper level of worship as you take time to think about God.
 - 5** Review Lesson 2, praying for the Holy Spirit to strengthen the right attitudes in you.
 - 6** Let the Holy Spirit help you pray the Lord’s Prayer. Take time to feel every part of it deeply.
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C. LET THE SPIRIT PRAY THROUGH YOU

Goal 3. Explain what it means to pray in the Spirit.

So many times we do not know how to pray. We do not understand what the needs of a person are or what the solution is. We are not sure what the will of God is. Or, perhaps we just do not have words to express the love of God that wells up in

us—or the agony that seems to tear us apart, the inner conflicts, the fears, the separation. The Holy Spirit offers to take all these longings and needs of the soul and talk with the Father about them himself. Sometimes He may do this by pouring out through your lips in your prayer language that comes from Him and not from your own mind. Under His inspiration, you pour out your soul's deepest longings or worship to God. At other times, He may prefer to do this in a language of His own—a special prayer language.

Application

7 Read Romans 8:26–27 again. Write any advantages you see in letting the Holy Spirit pray through you.

1 Corinthians 14:2 “For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.”

What wonderful release comes to our own spirit through such prayer! We do not have to understand all about the problem and the solution—the Spirit presents it in His own words and asks for what is best. He prays according to God's will; this gives us the assurance that the prayer will be answered.

This kind of praying is called “praying in the Spirit” or “speaking in tongues.” People sometimes refer to it as *glossalalia*, from the Greek word for “tongues.” Millions of Christians in the world today let the Holy Spirit pray through them in whatever language He chooses.

This first happened to 120 of Jesus' followers on the day of Pentecost. They were filled with the Spirit and began to praise God in languages that they had never learned. In the crowd that gathered, people from many countries understood what the Christians were saying in these different languages. They were talking about the wonderful things God had done!

Acts 2:4 “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

The apostle Paul evidently let the Spirit pray through him in tongues a great deal as he interceded for the needs of new Christians, Christian workers, and the churches that he had founded. (He refers to it as “praying with his spirit”.) But this did not keep him from praying earnestly in his own words, too. The Spirit helps us pray in both ways.

1 Corinthians 14:14–15 “For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.”

Application

8 If you feel the need for a deeper level of prayer, talk with the Holy Spirit about it.

9 Now review Lesson 5, asking the Holy Spirit to help you feel what He feels about the needs you have listed. Let the Holy Spirit direct and pray through you for each one. Speak the words He gives you; He will pray for them according to the will of God.



D. ACT IN THE SPIRIT’S POWER

Goal 4. Discuss the importance of putting the Spirit’s power into practice.

All through this course we have talked about letting God use us to help answer our prayers. We listen for the Holy Spirit to give instructions, but how can we do what He tells us to do? Through His power!

Philippians 2:13 “For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.”

After we pray in the Spirit and ask for His help, we can go out and do His bidding, trusting Him to work through us. If we ask Him to save our friends, He tells us to teach them about Jesus. We ask Him to help us do it, and He does. We can speak and act with confidence, knowing that God is answering our prayers.

1 John 5:14–15 “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.”

This power of the Spirit is not only for *speaking* as witnesses for Jesus but also for *living* for Him, being the kind of person He wants us to be. Our lives speak louder than words about the love and power of God.

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

2 Timothy 1:7 “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”

Galatians 5:16 “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”

Now as you finish these studies, the main test is to put into practice what you have learned. Of course, Satan, the Evil One, will try to hinder you. He opposes God’s work and does not want you to pray. But the Holy Spirit will help you! He will give you victory over Satan and power to do God’s will. May He bless and use you to win great victories for yourself and others when you pray!

Ephesians 6:17–18 “Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And 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 saints.”

2 Corinthians 10:4–5 “The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

Jude 20 “But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.”

Application

10 Review briefly Lesson 6, asking the Lord to help you act in His power as you pray with others and encourage others to pray.

11 List in your notebook any problem areas in your life where you need the power of the Holy Spirit. Talk with Him about them.



CONGRATULATIONS

You have finished this course. We hope that it has been a great help to you! Remember to complete the second Unit Evaluation and return the answer sheet to your instructor.

Check Your Answers

The exercises in this lesson have asked you to review what you have learned. Are you applying the principles to your life now? The blessings of prayer come not to those who simply learn about prayer, but to those who actually pray. Do not be a silent Christian! God, your Father who loves you, is ready to hear, speak, and answer.

