

Praying for the Presence of Holy Spirit

John 14:15–17

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We are in our second week talking about the need to pray for sinners. Last week laid out how we are ambassadors of Jesus. We represent Jesus to a world and culture that have don't know Him.

This week we will be looking at four passages of scripture. Each passage Jesus is speaking about the Holy Spirit: who is He, what He does, how He ministers to us and through us, and what we need to do.

If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. John 14:15–17 (NLT)

Every person who loves Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus wants you to have the Advocate, Comforter, Counselor, Teacher, Helper. He has asked the Father. They had a conversation. It was determined when we would receive the Holy Spirit.

Jesus wasn't asking permission. He is God. The Holy Spirit wasn't left out of the conversation. The decision wasn't about if we would receive the Holy Spirit, it was when. The when was after Jesus lived, died, and rose from the dead.

Jesus is telling His disciples in every generation that the Paraclete will be sent. Paraclete is the Greek word that is translated Advocate, Comforter, Counselor, Teacher, Helper. We have all and even more because the Holy Spirit is able to do all things. The Holy Spirit is an Advocate, Comforter, Counselor, Teacher, Helper.

In the Old Testament the prophets had the Holy Spirit with them. The Holy Spirit would be with them to speak a message or bring about a miracle. The Holy Spirit moved upon the prophets or others to accomplish God's will.

The hair we are splitting is between with and in. The eggs, the cocoa, the brownie mix are all on the counter. But until the eggs, cocoa, and brownie mix are mixed together you don't have brownies. You get some benefit from looking at it, but when the eggs, cocoa and browning mix are together and come out of the oven, then you have brownies. I don't know if that explains the Holy Spirit with and in, but I know you enjoy brownies.

I'm not making fun, but seeking to help us understand that as people who love Jesus, who follow Jesus, who trust Jesus we are filled with the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is in us.

The Holy Spirit entered your life because you wanted to be saved from your sins. You gave your sins to Jesus, He gave you the Holy Spirit. You confessed your love for Jesus, He gave you the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is with you and in you. You have two choices, ignore the Holy Spirit or follow the Holy Spirit. Christians do both all the time.

There are moments when we don't want to follow the Holy Spirit because of fear. Fear wins the battle. There are moments when we are eager to follow the Holy Spirit even though we are afraid. In these moments we are following the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit can work in you with great drama, emotion, and action. The Holy Spirit can empower you to do miracles. The Holy Spirit can speak through you in words you can't understand. The Holy Spirit can draw out of you a joy and excitement that people can't explain. This is up to the Holy Spirit. God's plans and purposes will be fulfilled.

The Holy Spirit can work in you quietly, peacefully, and subtly. The Holy Spirit could whisper quietly to your soul. The whisper may be so subtle that you weren't sure what you heard. The Holy Spirit may place small situations, people, or circumstances in your path. Many would call them coincidences, but you realize it was the Holy Spirit.

Every time the Holy Spirit is being your Advocate, Comforter, Counselor, Teacher, Helper. It's up to the Holy Spirit to determine the way He will work to complete God's plans and purposes.

But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. John 14:26 (NLT)

The Holy Spirit is always teaching us how we can live for Jesus. Our mission is to glorify God by living for Jesus. The more we know Jesus, the better we will be at living for Him.

In my life I recognize two simple ways the Holy Spirit has been teaching me. The first is the Holy Spirit opening my mind, my thinking to the things of God. I see this happening when I'm engaged in Bible Study, prayer, and conversations with other Christians. As I read through the Bible the Holy Spirit takes the ink off the page translating it into spiritual insights. I read sometimes and it's just words. But, then there are the times when the Holy Spirit uses a specific verse to address an issue in my heart.

The Word is alive by the work of the Holy Spirit. This is why it is important to ask the Holy Spirit to open your mind when you are reading scripture and having conversations with other believers. This is also why you need to be reading scripture.

The second way the Holy Spirit teaches me is through an experience or a situation. In the middle of a crisis we often ask the question why. "Why God are you doing this to me?" I've often shared with you not to ask the why question, just trust Jesus. Don't focus on the why question. Focus on trusting Jesus in the situation. There is a lesson right there. But when I'm focused on Jesus, I start to get a new perspective, a new insight, a new understanding. This is almost always clarity into God's plans, God's power, God's love. This is the Holy Spirit working in me.

So, what I'm learning is not merely knowledge. This is more than information. When the Holy Spirit teaches me through a situation, I'm learning how to live.

Instead of being anxious or afraid, I'm learning to be at peace. Instead of letting my anger or discouragement get the better of me, I'm learning to be patient. Instead of trying to do everything myself, I'm learning to lean on His power.

Knowledge given by the Holy Spirit is only helpful to you and to others when it becomes action. I'm coming back to something I said earlier. When the Holy Spirit speaks to us we can ignore the message or we can follow the Holy Spirit.

You're reading scripture and you receive a new insight into forgiveness. "That's interesting, but I'm not changing my attitude about that so and so, who did me wrong."

You're facing surgery and you keep dwelling on the doctor's shaky hands, even though you're praying for healing. There is no action with the knowledge that you have received from the Holy Spirit.

When we receive insight about forgiveness stop holding grudges and forgive. When you're praying for healing stop thinking about the problems and turn your attention to the great healer. When you are praying for the salvation of a co-worker, friend, or family member be engaged with that person. Seek out the individual, spend time with the person, listen to their issues. If the Holy Spirit tells you to talk to the sinner next door, start talking. When the Holy Spirit tells you to build a bridge to sinners, build the bridge.

"When you are brought to trial in the synagogues and before rulers and authorities, don't worry about how to defend yourself or what to say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what needs to be said." Luke 12:11–12 (NLT)

The Holy Spirit is ready to put the right words in our mouths. I have never had to defend my faith in a trial for my life or freedom. I've never been drug before the rulers and authorities. I have on many occasions trusted the Holy Spirit for the right words when I was speaking to sinners. Everyone of Jesus disciples did this in one form or another. Some of their interactions have been recorded for us. Some of them have been lost to history.

Peter and John were brought before the leaders and told to stop preaching about Jesus. They were under the threat of punishment and death. Both men were considered common, uneducated men. Peter the man who was often times opening his mouth boldly and carelessly was also the man who opened his mouth letting the Holy Spirit speak. Peter did this on more than one occasion when he was told to stop talking about Jesus. When told not to preach about Jesus, ***Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."*** Acts 5:29 (ESV) These were the words of faith from the Holy Spirit. Peter had stopped trying to be His own boss, and was following the Holy Spirit.

We stumble and bumble our way when we go it alone. Even the best of us as Christians don't always say and do the right things. It is our instinct, our nature, to do our own thing. Sometimes that means we are silent. Sometimes that means we are fools when we speak. You know exactly what I'm talking about. Our instincts and our nature is sinful, not of God. Every Christian struggles with our nature.

Don't rely on your instincts, your human nature but listen for the Holy Spirit to speak. The Holy Spirit will only speak of the things of Jesus. The Holy Spirit won't speak out of selfishness, pride, discouragement, or despair.

The Holy Spirit will bring to mind the words of Jesus. These words might be a quote from the Bible. They might be the words of another believer. They will always agree with scripture and with Jesus. So whatever voices are in your head, pay closest attention to the words and thoughts which are from Jesus, which honor Jesus, which bring about the work of Jesus.

You and I are filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in you. He is Advocating, Comforting, Counseling, Teaching, Helping us live to our lives for Jesus. He is speaking in our lives and even in the lives of sinners. The Holy Spirit is making you into a more faithful follower of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is calling sinners to leave their sin and follow Jesus. My words and actions matter. I need to trust the Holy Spirit. Your words and actions matter. You need to trust the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. John 16:8 (NLT)

Pray for the Holy Spirit to convict sinners to come to Jesus. Our words and actions will only go so far, the Holy Spirit changes hearts. People have hard hearts toward God. They don't want to be in a relationship with Him. They want to follow their nature and their instincts. Not every sinner likes their sin, but every sinner likes their independence. They want to do what they want when they want.

We can't leave it to their conscience about what is right or wrong. Right and wrong are being blurred everyday. Right is what people want. Wrong happens when one person tells another person they can't do something.

There needs to be a higher authority convicting people of their sin. That higher authority is the Holy Spirit. He is the one who defines what is of God and what is not from God. It was the Holy Spirit who taught Noah what was from God. It was the Holy Spirit who taught Abraham, Moses, David, and all the prophets what was from God. The Holy Spirit counseled Peter and all the disciples of Jesus through the ages concerning the things of God.

The Holy Spirit counseled you to follow Jesus. The Holy Spirit showed how your life was going against God's plans. The Holy Spirit made it plain to you that you were offending your Creator. The Holy Spirit is leading you everyday to follow Jesus.

In the midst of all our prayer requests, what needs to be paramount is sinners coming to Jesus. We often pray for ourselves, I know that I do. I'm probably the biggest subject of my prayers. I pray for my wife and my family. I pray for each of you. I pray for those troubled in their hearts and minds. I pray for the people who are battling a disease. I pray for those who sick or have broken bones. I also pray for those who are sinners to come to Jesus. I could pray more for the Holy Spirit to convict them of their sin. I will pray more for the Holy Spirit to speak into their thinking and their actions.

If we aren't praying for the salvation of sinners then we are failing Jesus and the sacrifice He made for every person who has ever breathed. My eternal destination is secure. I have given my life to Jesus. Your eternal destination is secure. You gave your life to Jesus.

But there are people, young and old, male and female, tall and short who haven't given their lives to Jesus. Their eternal destination isn't heaven. Unless they make the choice to follow Jesus, they will spend eternity in hell.

Pray for their ears to hear the Holy Spirit calling them from their sin. Pray for their eyes to be open to the Holy Spirit revealing Jesus as their Savior.