

Praying In The Power Of The Holy Spirit: Part I — Pre-requisites

Paul instructs Christians to “*pray in the Spirit on all occasions,*” (Ephesians 6:18). Therefore, we can know that praying in the Spirit is a distinct privilege for the child of God. But how do we pray in the Holy Spirit? What is different from our current prayer practices?

The concept of praying in the Holy Spirit is first stated in Jude 20-23 which says, “*But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, (21) Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (22) And of some have compassion, making a difference: (23) And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*”

- **The Christian must be abiding**, devoutly meditating on the Word of God, if he would be "building up yourselves on your most holy faith.
- **The Christian must be prayerful** -- "praying in the Holy Ghost." The believer must spend time conversing with God who speaks to him in the Bible.
- **The Christian must be trustful** --keeping yourselves in the love of God.
- **The Christian must be hopeful**, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Our great hope is to spend eternity in fellowship with God Almighty
- **The Christian must be compassionate**, And of some have compassion, making a difference: Mean people do not make a holy difference in other people. Compassionate people do and one of the observable traits of a Christian is their love. By their love shall the world know God's people.

There are two critical prerequisites for praying in the spirit.

The first prerequisite for prayer in the Spirit must be in accordance with the word of God. In other words, the believer must read and study and walk according to the truths revealed in the Bible. This is how we abide in the Word both theoretically and practically.

The second prerequisite is the condition of the Temple within the believer.

Let's first look at abiding in the Bible. The Bible is the foundation on which God has chosen to reveal Himself to mankind down through the ages. It provides not only the revelation that God exists, but instructs us in His truths, character, teachings, His Divine Will and equally importantly God's purpose for man and appropriate behavior. God created a perfect man in His image in a perfect universe for fellowship. We know this truth since God proclaimed his creation and mankind to be "good" throughout Genesis 1-3. The Bible says God created man in His own image. In giving man an immortal soul, God gave man a personality which includes self-consciousness, intellect, the ability to reason, free will, the power to make choices, and includes the distinct moral responsibilities (ownership) for those choices. At creation, Man was made in God's image as the wholly generated man ready made for Divine fellowship throughout eternity with God.

We know the story of how Satan tempted Adam and Eve who in turn rebelled against God and lost his "perfection in God." However; Within the Word God reveals His plan to regenerate and reconcile man to Himself. There is significant coverage in the Bible devoted to the daily conduct of a righteous man and how one is to live by faith daily.

Through the Bible God teaches us much about prayer, or if you will, conversing with God Almighty. Prayer keeps the soul in touch with God. Merely reading the Bible and learning everything written therein has the tendency to make one intoxicated over God's words and doctrines rather than God Himself. Prayer alone, if unguided by scripture can tend to drift toward inappropriate topics with excessive enthusiasm, unreasoning zeal, or wild and extravagant notions on some subjects. But the Bible together with prayer provides a solid foundation on which to develop a sturdy Christian character.

Prayer is almost universal in mankind. Even unsaved people pray. Nations pray. Whenever there is a sense of need and helplessness to meet that need, men cry out for help from a higher power. Consider the number of prayers offered daily for the coronavirus pandemic that is now sweeping our entire planet. And it is wrong to conclude that the prayers of unconverted people are never heard. All believers at one time or another cried out to God in repentance and for salvation. God certainly heard those unsaved prayers.

God hears the prayers of both the saved and unsaved.

Henry Allen Ironside, a Canadian-American Bible teacher, preacher, theologian, pastor of Moody Church in Chicago from 1929 to 1948, and author wrote,

"The man whom our Lord healed of his blindness said, 'We know that God heareth not sinners.' This is true, in the sense that he meant it. But the cases of Hagar, in the wilderness, the heathen mariners mentioned in Jonah, and other similar instances must not be overlooked. It is wrong and foolish to try to set bounds to the mercy of God. He who hears the prayers of the young ravens when they cry for food, hears the agonized heart-cries of troubled men who are of 'more value than many sparrows' in His eyes. Both scripture and history testify to prayers answered in wondrous grace, even those who prayed were ignorant of the 'One' to whom their entreaties were directed."

Praying in the Holy Spirit is not the above prayers. Unsaved people cannot pray "in the Holy Spirit" for no one can pray in the Spirit who is not indwelt by the Spirit. Before Christ people prayed according to the Spirit as they were controlled by Him, although He did not indwell Believers as He does now. Scripture marks this, "He hath been with you, He shall be in you." Praying in the Spirit is a key indicator of the current dispensation. It is the Holy Spirit's abiding presence in the children of God that distinguishes this period from all previous dispensations.

Sadly, even though the Holy Spirit indwells all believers, few truly recognize this truth and experience the great joy accompanying this salvation gift. "I believe in the Holy Spirit is nothing more than a thoughtless cantation frequently repeated and seldom considered. What a great joy is being missed.

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." Ephesians 1:13.

The Holy Spirit lives within you if you are a believer. Your body is His Temple (Home and place of worship). The Holy Spirit has come to make his permanent residence in you.

Let me ask you Can you recognize Him? Is there any evidence of the Holy Spirit living in you? Have you welcomed Him? What have you done to make his residence more comfortable? Or are you grieving the Holy Spirit with the condition of His temple?

How strongly does it need be said before Christians wake-up and get it! He is the Holy Spirit. He is God. Every much God as the Father Almighty and Jesus, His Son.

He, God the Holy Spirit detests sin. All forms whether pride, lust, selfishness, worldliness, in every shape, form, and degree. The Holy Spirit is sensitive to sin and easily grieved. How many of us have never, never, never seriously sought yo "clean house" that we may offer suited residence for God the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 says, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The very next verse speaks of the House-cleaning that is required if the Holy Spirit would be made at home within us. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.

This is so important, so please take particular notice. Only as the Holy Spirit abides in us ungrieved can we really pray confidently in the Holy Spirit.

This is the reason so many prayers go unanswered. Its why at times when we pray there is no joy or liberty. The grieved Holy Spirit has gone silent and does not respond to our petitions. Communion is broken. Our prayers become useless since He wants us to clean up our act.

The Holy Spirit has not left us since he will never leave. He is the earnest of our salvation and will abide within us forever. But the Holy Spirit is not comfortable nor at home within a sin-cluttered heart.

Therefore to turn His temple into a fitting abode for the God of this universe, we must undergo a spiritual house-cleaning by confessing our sins and repenting of them.

For only as the Holy Spirit living in the believer is ungrieved can we pray in the Holy Spirit.