

## Cooperating With the Holy Spirit (3)

### Introduction

- A. Too often we consider prayer as the most dull and powerless area of the Christian life.
- B. In contrast, prayer, in the Bible, is often associated with power.

*I pray ... he may **strengthen you with power** through his Spirit in your inner being ... may have **power to grasp** ... the love of Christ ... now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, **according to his power that is at work within us.** Ephesians 3:16-20.*

*Finally, **be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power...** And **pray in the Spirit** on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. Ephesians 6:10, 18*

*And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord ... **being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might** ... Colossians 1:10,11*

*The prayer of a righteous man (person) is **powerful and effective.** James 5:16*

- C. How does healing/intercessory prayer differ from “ordinary praying”?
  1. In the light of the Bible and God’s eyes — there is probably no difference.
  2. In our experience there seems to be a world of difference. The reason may be that we have trivialized prayer by doing it incorrectly and accepting that procedure as our model. We may “pray” **without expecting God to be present or to do anything.** We may not plan on God being present and working among us. The result is a life of religious formality — powerless — largely meaningless — and a “religious word” activity instead of involvement with God.
  3. How should we define healing/intercessory prayer? A provisional definition: **Healing/intercessory prayer is a spiritual activity in which the one praying enters into a cooperative ministry with the Holy Spirit to bring the person or group prayed for into the presence of God so the power of God’s Kingdom may be released in harmony with His will for the person or group at that moment of their life.**

### I. The Principle of Creation — We have been Created in the Image of God.

***So God created man (persons) in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.** Genesis 1:27*

- A. This verse teaches that we are basically spirit — spiritual — as the quality of our personhood.
- B. We are not basically mind, emotions, will, body — or a social person. We are spirit.

- C. Being in the image of God means our most fundamental, basic, and greatest abilities are all in the spirit — spiritual — area of our life. And, it means that our basic needs are “spiritual” in nature. We will not please God, or succeed in life, if we treat ourselves as mind, emotions, will, body or a social person. Healing/intercessory prayer is a “spirit involvement” with God and the person with whom we are praying.

## II. The Principle of Transformation — We Have Been Redeemed.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old is gone, the new has come ... And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation ....* II Corinthians 5:17, 19

- A. Through salvation, the old relationships and defilement are gone. We are reborn. John 3:3,5  
 B. Through salvation, the image of God and all spiritual equipment has been renewed. Hebrews 13:20,21

## III. The Principle of Enablement — We Have Been Given the Holy Spirit.

*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.* Romans 8:15,16

- A. The Holy Spirit has been given to us as the seal (guarantee/protection) of our salvation. Ephesians 1:13,14  
 B. The Holy Spirit has been given to us to enable us to pray powerfully and with wisdom. Romans 8:26  
 C. The Holy Spirit has given us gifts and will give us “temporary gifts” to equip us to know and do His will in praying for one another. I Corinthians 12 and 14; Hebrews 13:20,21  
 D. The above truths will have little effect in the life of a person who is not in “step with the Spirit” (Gal 5:25) and is not “filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18). Many believers know very little of full surrender on a practical daily basis, know little of the fear of God, know little of the joy of the Lord, know little about practical faith, and know very little about a compassionate concern for other that leads into healing/intercessory prayer.

## IV. The Principle of God’s Present Kingdom — The Kingdom is now but also not yet.

*But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.* Matt 12:28

*For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.* I Cor 15:25

- A. These passages clearly emphasize the presence of the Kingdom today and the truth that the full realization of that Kingdom is yet future.

- B. The presence of God's Kingdom simply means that He has provided for many of the redemptive benefits of that Kingdom to be available to us today. This "mystery of the Kingdom" is the reason why some may be healed, as an answer to prayer, and some may not be healed.
- C. It is helpful to keep in mind that "Jesus message is that in his own person and mission God has invaded human history and has triumphed over evil, even though the final deliverance will occur only at the end of the age." (George Ladd, **A Theology of the New Testament**, Eerdmans, 1974, pp. 67,68)

#### **V. The Principle of Office — We Have Been Given the Office of Priesthood.**

*You also, like living stones, are built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. I Peter 2:5*

- A. To be a priest means we have the authority (right) and power (enablement) to serve God.
- B. The office of priesthood is a legal relationship. We do not discern our office emotionally.
- C. The provisions of our office must be practiced — for it's power to be released.

#### **VI. The Context of Ministry — We Are to Administer God's Grace to Others.**

*Each of us should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. I Peter 4:10*

- A. Consider the power of God's provision — a believer can dispense (give away) grace!
- B. One of the gifts all believers has been given — is that of prayer. **We can pray the will of God into some degree of actuality** in the life of others. Ephesians 6:18-20; James 5:17,18

#### **VII. The Principle of Promise — Prayer: a Major Channel of Divine Healing and Grace.**

*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? **If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!** Matthew 7:7-11*

*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. **The prayer of a righteous man (person) is powerful and effective.** James 5:16*

- A. All of the above provision and truth can be channeled to another through prayer.
  - B. It is in prayer that our office of priest becomes most effective — through God's power. **We must stop selling ourselves short by unbelief! God has given us the priesthood.** 1 Peter 2:5,9
- Some Practical Suggestions**

- A. It is helpful to ask a person what they would like you to pray for. As you do be “open” to the guidance of the Holy Spirit that may relate to their request. You may be given a word or picture of how to pray. It may be good to pray about the cause and source of the problem. It is appropriate to pray “We unite in uncovering the source of this problem.” “If this affliction is of You, Heavenly Father, we accept it and thank You for it. But, if this affliction is caused by the enemy in some way, then we stand together against that and break down the source of this problem. We bring the power of Your Crucifixion and Resurrection against any demonic involvement here. Reveal to us how to proceed in prayer.”
- B. As we pray for a person we must be careful not to jump to some conclusion about their “hidden sin” or some devious work of the enemy. It is always right to pray a “Bible Prayer” such as Ephesians 1:17-23, 3:16-21 or use the Lord’s Prayer.
- C. Apply the promises of God by prayer. Encourage the person and build a foundation for prayer by using a passage such as Matthew 7:7-11 and James 5:16. “Heavenly Father we thank You for Your promise to give us what we ask. We do ask for Your will in \_\_\_\_\_ life. We bring Your will to bear on his/her request. We focus Your power and grace upon this physical (emotional, social, spiritual, mental, family, job) problem. We invite You, dear Lord, into this need and ask that You would come and take charge of it. Lead \_\_\_\_\_ so he/she will know how to respond to You. Encourage him/her by Your presence. We ask that you would release Your healing power in his/her life and glorify Yourself by meeting this need.
- D. Keep the prayer simple and Biblical. Do not preach or pry. It is always good to pray the armor on a person and to bless what God is doing in his/her life. As God to bless them, to encourage them, to give them a greater desire for Him, for His Word, and for worship.
- E. **You are a priest — use your authority and ability to pray the will of God into existence.**

### A Few Good Books

Blue, Ken *Authority to Heal*, IVP, 1987  
 Foster, Richard *Prayer*, Harper, 1992  
 Kraft, Charles *Deep Wounds Deep Healing*, Servant Publications, 1993  
 Lea, Larry *Releasing the Prayer Anointing*, Thomas Nelson, 1996  
 Maxwell, John *Partners in Prayer*, Thomas Nelson, 1996  
 Sanford, John and Mark *Deliverance and Inner Healing*, Chosen Books, 1992  
 Sheets, Dutch *Intercessory Prayer*, Regal, 1996

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