

the tearing of the temple veil (read **Matthew 27.51**) man is no longer separated from God. There isn't an intercessor any longer between God and man. With the death and resurrection of Christ, an entirely different relationship was established and we have the ability to walk with God in our lives, full of possibility, with the kingdom of heaven being brought to people through things such as *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control*.

DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

When you think of the Holy Spirit, what do you think? What thoughts come to mind? When you consider what Jesus say in **John 16.7**, does that confirm your thoughts, clarify your thoughts, or change them? Explain.

On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 signifying a total quenching of the Holy Spirit, and 10 being completely on engulfed by the Holy Spirit, where are you? Do you want to change this? When reading **Galatians 5.22-23**, how many of these characteristics are displayed in your life on a daily basis? Give some examples.

PRAYER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Luke 11.2-4 (NIV) 2 He said to them, “Whenever you pray, say: Father, Your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come.3 Give us each day our daily bread.4 And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone in debt to us. And do not bring us into temptation.”

Jesus was praying when one of his disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, just like John the Baptist taught his disciples to pray. Likely, this disciple noted the difference in prayer when Jesus prayed. Perhaps it was not just technique, but it was outcome also; for when Jesus prayed, things tended to happen. Quite simply, Jesus gave a simple breakdown for prayer, an algorithm. Jesus simply stated that we should honor and worship God, ask for His kingdom to come, and to provide for us. We should ask for forgiveness and we should be mindful to forgive others, as well as that God should keep us from temptation.

Most telling is that as we honor and worship God; we are also to ask for His kingdom to come now. Jesus already explained that the Kingdom was among men now (read **Luke 17.21, Matthew 3.2, Matthew 4.17, and Mark 1.15**). Note that it was God's kingdom, not men. Jesus was directing to ask God to be present now; this would mean in our lives and in our circumstances. We are not slaves, but children of God where we are able to reach out to God as our Father (read **Romans 8.15 and Galatians 4.6**). With that, we can pray for what we need, the general idea that Jesus is trying to get across is that we need to pour our heart out to God, and in return the Holy Spirit comforts us and intercedes for us (read **Romans 8.26-27**).

DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

How is your prayer life? Take the same 1 to 10 scale from earlier, and share where your prayer life is on this scale. Why did you give yourself that score? Do you desire more prayer, and if so, what keeps you from it? Is it a conscious decision, or does the time get away from you? How can you change that? Explain. Create a goal for you to begin making time daily. Share with someone so that they can hold you accountable.

PERSISTENCE IN PRAYER

Luke 11.5-8 (HCSB) 5 He also said to them: “Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him at midnight and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, 6 because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I don’t have anything to offer him.’ 7 Then he will answer from inside and say, ‘Don’t bother me! The door is already locked, and my children and I have gone to bed. I can’t get up to give you anything.’ 8 I tell you, even though he won’t get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his friend’s persistence, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

After providing an algorithm for prayer, Jesus immediately provided two stories to further demonstrate the correct posture of prayer. In this first story, Jesus is encouraging persistence. Regardless of the hour, we should be persistent in asking of God, pouring out our heart. We need to keep asking, and keep seeking His presence. Paul echoes this sentiment in **Colossians 4.2**, and Jesus tells a similar story, where we should be as persistent widow (read **Luke 18.1-8**). I would go as far as saying that in persistence it is not that God wants us to beg, but rather rely on Him. The Holy Spirit persists for us. As we continue to pour out our hearts to God, we draw closer to God and He draws closer to us. It is our persistence in seeking Him that we find the provision He has for us.

DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

Have you ever felt like you have been a bit too aggressive in asking God for something? What was it? In that persistence, what did God show you? Did He slowly change your request, or was His answer something different than what you asked? Explain.

GOOD GOOD FATHER

Luke 11.9-13 (HCSB) 9 “So I say to you, keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who searches finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit(s) to those who ask Him?”

The next story speaks more to God’s character than to the first (Honestly... would God be irritated with us knocking on His door in the middle of the night?). In this passage, Jesus is reminding us of the goodness of the Father. Jesus takes it to the next level by asking the question, “How much more...?”. God will lavishly gift us in ways we cannot comprehend or fathom (read **Luke 12.27**), but we must be cautious not to ask or judge by earthly context or definition. God knows us, better than we know ourselves (read **Romans 8.27**).

The Holy Spirit is available for those that ask; available in abundance. It is the same Holy Spirit that dwelled within Christ on Earth and is the empowerment of God. The possibilities are endless. As we look to God’s will and God’s kingdom here on earth, there is a Godly wisdom He will pour out on us (read **James 1.5**). Consider Solomon’s request and how God enabled him (read **2 Chronicles 1**).

DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

Can you think of a time when God provided for you much grander and fulfilling than what you asked? Explain. What did you learn from that? Do you tend to forget the experience and find yourself worried with other things? Has God consistently surprised you? Have you been prayerfully consistent? Where do you think the Holy Spirit fits into this? Discuss.

TOTAL ACCESS

You have complete access to the creator of the universe, Heaven, and Earth. The forming genius and relational master is looking for you. He hears your knocks (read **Revelation 3.20**) and desires to be with you. In our day-to-day life, we must be mindful to take Him with us, living life with a kingdom purpose and kingdom focus.

Take him to work with you. Radiate God's peace, love and understanding to you and be a light where the world seems dark. Be salt where the world has lost flavor. Take God with you in our finances, in your relationships, and in your chance meetings with others.

The Holy Spirit will eliminate the worldly influence. Why would we need a comforter if everything were absolutely fine? As the Spirit dwells in us, the commercial brainwashing of our society has no effect on us. Francis Chan wrote in *Forgotten God*,

“The world is not moved by love or actions that are of human creation. And the church is not empowered to live differently from any other gathering of people without the Holy Spirit. But when believers live in the power of the Spirit, the evidence in their lives is supernatural. The church cannot help but be different, and the world cannot help but notice.”

The world cannot compete with the Kingdom. The intangible becomes tangible through the spirit living in us and through us. There is no situation that is *harder than we think* when the Spirit is involved.

Do you complain to God? If you don't complain, how can you be comforted? Are you in Pain? Take it to God. It's not about being a servant, its about being a child. It's not about living for God, it's about living with God. Be in a place of faith and not cynicism. God see's you; you are not inconsequential. Your relationship with the Holy Spirit is your conduit to God. Transformation happens here, but you must make the time. God will take our simple notes, and create a symphony of His kingdom around us. Make space and make time.

DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

Do you feel far from God? Do you feel that maybe your current condition in life is inconsequential to God? In detail, outline what it is you need God to rearrange, heal, and transform. Make time and allow the Holy Spirit to be truly transformational in your life. Read Acts 2; imagine would can happen in your life – imagine the transformation that can happen to you and those around you. Dream a little... how would you like God to use you? Write it down, and pray for it persistently. Listen and watch for His answers in all that transpires in and around you. Maybe your thoughts will be transposed to a polar opposite perspective –to a kingdom perspective. Maybe the Holy Spirit will move through you and you will demonstrate kingdom live. What can this look like in your life? Kingdom focus, kingdom purpose.

Do you complain to God? Do you put it all out there? Be transparent and use your prayer time to outpour your heart to God. Leave it all on the table for Him to take. Allow the Holy Spirit to transform you. Be prayerful in your approach. Be consistent. Be persistent.

PROVIDE US WITH FEEDBACK

We are excited about the potential these studies have to help each of us process the weekend message at a deeper level, and to see God change our lives in significant ways. In order to make these guides as helpful as possible, we would love to hear which elements are most helpful, which are least helpful, as well as any other comments, questions or suggestions. Feel free to send your feedback directly to Jon Holmberg at gabrielslyric@msn.com.

REFERENCES