

Ask For More of the Holy Spirit

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"What Father among you if his son asks for a fish will instead of a fish give him a serpent? Or if he asks for an egg will give him a scorpion? If you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Now, brethren, I would just challenge you here. How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? One thing I want you to see right off and absolutely clearly and make no mistake about: These are saved men asking Jesus to teach them to pray. These are not lost men asking Jesus how to be saved. Now that's important because the way to be saved is not to ask God for the Holy Spirit. You understand that, right? Because there can be a misunderstanding here. People can look at this and they can say, well, if they're asking for the Holy Spirit, maybe that means that they don't have the Holy Spirit and people that don't have the Holy Spirit are lost people, and so you go the Father and you ask Him for the Spirit, and basically, if, you know, Paul says this in Roman 8, if you don't have the Spirit, you don't belong to Jesus Christ. Right? So maybe it's people who don't have the Spirit, who don't belong to Jesus Christ coming to the Father to get the Spirit so that they can get saved.

I don't know if any of you have ever thought that, but that is obviously not what that means. What you have is you have the idea of a child going to his father, which is very consistent with the disciples asking Jesus to show them how to pray to their Father. And that's how Jesus started, right? Pray this way: "Father..." "Our Father..." So, what does that mean? Obviously every single Christian has the Holy Spirit, so if we already have the Spirit, and if the Spirit once takes up residency - by the way, one of the promises connected with the New Covenant is that God's going to give His Spirit to us. He's going to put His Spirit within us. And if we don't have that Spirit, what is it? About Romans 8:9 I think? If we don't have the Spirit, we don't belong to Christ.

And obviously, we don't go having the Spirit, losing the Spirit, having the Spirit, losing the Spirit. Once that Spirit is given, He is with us always. Forever. Jesus said that. Jesus said that this Comforter was coming, and He would be with them forever. And so what do we make of that? Why are we praying for the Holy Spirit if we already have the Holy Spirit? Well, it's interesting, if we look at the parallel passage over in Matthew 7, it doesn't say "Holy Spirit" there, it says "good things." It almost seems to me like what Luke does is He reaches in the bag of good things and He brings out the best thing. And why would I say the best thing? Because Jesus, back there in that area where John started - the John 14, 15, 16 realm where Christ is leaving His disciples - do you know why He was telling them that He was leaving them peace and that they ought not to be afraid? Because He was telling them at the same time that He was going away. He was going to be taken away, but He said this to them: Look, it is more profitable for you that I go and the Holy Spirit come. There is something about having the Holy Spirit that is more profitable for the church than if Christ remained here bodily, earthly Himself. And Jesus realized it. The Holy Spirit was going to unleash such power into the church.

You think about just what happened in the life of Peter. Here's Peter walking with Christ bodily on the earth, and look what he was like, versus when Christ leaves, the Spirit comes, now Peter's filled with the Spirit, where before he was denying Christ in front of little girls. Now he's standing boldly before the Sanhedrin and he's proclaiming Christ. And Christ Himself said Peter was going to go all the way to laying down his life for Christ. The Spirit of God endued the church of God with power from on high.

And basically, I think the way we want to take Luke 11, how much more will our Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask. It's the idea of the influences of the Spirit, and we all have to admit that even in that early church, they had the Spirit there. The Spirit came down on that church on the day of Pentecost. But some of those very same men upon whom that Spirit fell in that day, we find later accounts where filled with the Holy Spirit there was boldness, there was all sorts of things breaking out in the church. The power of God is not static in the church. You can't come to that conclusion by the book of Acts. You can't come to that conclusion historically. You can't come to that conclusion probably if you've been a Christian any length of time, you realize it in your own life. In the life of the church, we have ebbs and flows.

Brethren, a pastor friend has said, brethren, if we have such promise in the Scriptures, every time we come to pray, we ought to be asking for the Holy Spirit. For what? What does the Holy Spirit bring to the church? It brought to that early church boldness and courage to proclaim the Gospel. The Holy Spirit brings the Word to mind. Remember? He said if they get imprisoned or they're brought before these leaders that don't worry ahead of time what you're going to say? Have you guys ever experienced that? You've been in a situation - maybe you haven't been in prison, but you've been in a situation where immediately you needed something and God gave it to you. Brethren, He brings the fruits of the Spirit. The chief one is love. You just can't get away from it.

The New Testament is basically this: Christ gave a new commandment. That commandment is a commandment of love. That is the greatest test of Christianity. Love. And the Spirit is the one Who gives it to us. A love for Christ Himself. A love on the horizontal plane for one another. A love in the church. We heard about peace. He gives that peace. My peace I leave with you. Where does that peace come from? We find in Galatians 5 distinctly that peace comes from the Spirit of God. This Spirit is the one Who gives gifts to the church. Do we want gifts? Do we want laborers? Do we want men and women who have abilities to minister, to show mercy, to give, to teach, to serve? Absolutely! All that gamut of gifts. Even the supernatural element.

Brethren, it's the Spirit of God that gives those things. The Spirit of God is that Spirit which we are warned against quenching. Quenching has the idea of throwing water on a fire. You throw water on a fire, it diminishes its heat. It diminishes its light. The Spirit is what infuses the church with light and heat. We need to pray for the Spirit. When the Spirit helps us, when the Spirit empowers us, it's only then, brethren, that we can advance and we can take ground. It's the Spirit of God that puts that fire in the hearts of men and women to go forth, to lay down their lives for the Gospel's sake, to sacrifice. It's the Holy Spirit that we need in order to have a powerful Gospel. It's the Holy Spirit that causes men to be born again. We want to see life in this church. We want to see growth. Don't we find also, what is it about 2 Thessalonians 2:13? 1

Thessalonians 2:13 We find there, brethren, we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Sanctification. Any kind of growth.

Don't we also find in 2 Corinthians 3:18, that by the Lord Who is the Spirit, that's how we behold the glory of Christ? And are transformed into His image from one degree of glory to another? Brethren, the Spirit of God is also an intercessor in our prayers. We find that in Romans 8. The Spirit is a Spirit of adoption. And He bears witness with our spirits that we're children of God. Beloved, do we want assurance in this church? I'll tell you what, it's when we have a hope of salvation, and a deep-founded assurance that you can lay your life down for Christ. People would go around doubting, wondering, not sure if they're in, sure if they're out, very difficult for people like that to really launch out and do anything for Christ. Brethren, we need the Spirit's power and His working in our midst. And what we have here is a promise. What we have here is disciples coming to Christ and saying, "Teach us to pray."

And He wraps up this whole instruction on prayer with this: be persistent. Ask and seek and knock. And above every other thing that He talks to us about asking for, He says seek from your Father the Holy Spirit. I believe that when it says ask for the Holy Spirit, the idea is that we are to ask for His influences, for His fiery influences. Brethren, we don't want to quench that Spirit. We want to ask for it. Did that about use up that 20 minutes? Pretty close. I just leave you with this thought. "How much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" Did you catch those last words? To those who ask Him. Brethren, you let your Calvinism take you in a direction where you logically start to conclude that your prayers don't matter - James says you have not because you do not ask. Brethren, if you've got a sort of Calvinism that doesn't believe that statement, then dump it. Prayer matters. God hears prayer. God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask. Jesus does not say that if you don't ask, don't seek, don't knock, God is sovereign, God has His decrees, and He's going to do it anyways. He doesn't say that. He says He gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask. Brethren, God forbid we get to the end and we find we could have had more if we would have asked for it, but we just didn't ask. God help us to not get to that place. Amen. You're dismissed for the moment.