

The Holy Spirit and Prayer

Read: Romans 8:14-17

Introduction:

“...by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”” – Romans 8:15

As we wrap up our series on the Holy Spirit, we are reminded that our understanding of, and relationship with, the Holy Spirit are revealed by the quality of our prayer life. Even though all Christians pray, Pastor Paul invites us to take a closer look at *how* we pray, and ask ourselves these important questions: “What does it mean to *pray in the Spirit?*” And, “*Am I praying in the Spirit?*”

Also Read:

Ephesians 6:18, Jude 20:21.

Discuss:

1. As you reflect on the sermon, what has stood out to you?

“ABBA!”: Prayer is intimate, not formal

2. When Jesus prays he addresses his Father as “ABBA”, a word filled with tenderness and intimacy. Pastor Paul also illustrates from his own life the joy of having that closeness with his son. What feelings do these loving imageries bring up in you?

3. For some Christians, formality is intended to convey honor, reverence and propriety. How would you express those good intentions in intimate prayers?

“Cry”: Prayer is desperate, not buttoned up

4. The word *cry* connotes a quality of in-the-moment rawness, as God invites us to pray to Him in our desperation and brokenness. Is this an invitation you would accept when you don’t feel “presentable” before God?

“Father”: Prayer is positional (or familial), not transactional

5. When praying, how does addressing God as “dad” make you feel, versus His other names (Creator, Almighty, Lord, Jesus, Holy Spirit...)?

6. Pastor Paul acknowledges that not everyone has a loving relationship with their earthly father. If that is (or was) true for you, how has that difficult relationship affected your prayer life? And what would redemption look like?

“By Whom”: Prayer is experiential, not theoretical

7. “The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” (Rom 8:16) We can actually experience – not just know that God accepts us, loves us, and takes delight in us! What feelings come to you as you marinate in this remarkable truth?

“We”: Prayer is collective, not just personal

8. Take a moment to respond to Pastor Paul challenge to us, “Do I pray together with other Christians in this intimate way? Hearts laid out, to God and before others, confessing sins, interceding, contending for the Gospel, over loved ones and hurting ones?”

Apply:

Let’s commit to growing together in prayer. May our learning about the Holy Spirit translate into authentic demonstrations of God’s Kingdom.