

My prayer life

This chapter taken from the book *When Faith Came* by Franklin Whittenburg © 1998-2006

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The “Circumcision” event also marked the beginning of a new experience of communicating with God. Something started happening to me that I have not heard any other person or pastor discuss. I will not explain this experience in great detail, because people may try to imitate this to validate something that may be missing in their spiritual walk, which is of no real value to God or them.

I didn’t understand until later what this was, but if anybody else has experienced this I would like to know. I experienced the Holy Spirit interceding to God for me in a totally different way than through a “tongues prayer language” or a thought out petition to God, like when I pray for people or needs. Once again I always experience this in the chest area and not as a thought out prayer in my head. The seat of the Spirit is the heart, not the head, but we do have a spiritual mind also.

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (1 Corinthians 1:21,22).

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:27).

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Galatians 4:6).

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. (Romans 2:28,29).

When you are “wounded in the spirit” from rejection or betrayal from another person you experience a “heartache” not a “headache”. If you ever have had a broken relationship, you know what a “broken heart” feels like. This spiritual prayer language is a similar feeling to that. Coincidentally, Jesus said he came to heal the broken hearted, so this may be a part of the ministry of the Comforter also.

I can experience this at any time of the day or night, and after it is over, one of two things happen. I either receive a revelation in my mind, which I assume is an interpretation, or I receive comfort. Since this experience comes from my chest area and not out of my mouth, I can carry on a conversation with someone, do a task, or normal day-to-day activities without being hindered by it. I know when it starts, and I know

when it ends, but people around me are not aware of anything different. When people use a “tongues prayer language” everybody around them is aware of it.

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? (John 14:22).

And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? (Luke 24:31,32).

Sometimes the feeling is long, sometimes its short, I can only describe this experience like Paul did. It is not a moaning or groaning sound or any other audible sound. It is a groaning of the heart, which feels similar to a “heartache” with no noise being made. I have many friends that have a “prayer language” that they pray in, that sounds similar to speaking in tongues. Paul spoke of this type of prayer language to the Corinthians.

For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful (1 Corinthians 14:14).

I have never experienced this vocal type of prayer language spoken of in 1 Corinthians, but I believe that what I am experiencing is a different type. It is described in Romans as a spiritual prayer that CANNOT come out of the mouth (uttered).

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which CANNOT be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26,27).

The Bible specifically points out that the tongues that were spoken at Pentecost came “as the Spirit ***gave them utterance*** (out of the mouth)”, which is what the “tongues prayer language” does also, for the ones I have heard sound very similar.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4).

But in the verse in the book of Romans, the Bible says, “***the Spirit prays with groanings that cannot be uttered***”. This verse in Romans cannot then be talking about the same tongues prayer language Paul spoke of in I Corinthians 14:14 or any prayer language that comes out of the mouth. I don’t know if I will ever develop a tongues prayer language, but I am satisfied with this one until then. Once again, if anybody has experienced this type of prayer language, I would like to know. I have not heard of anybody else ever speaking about this same experience.

Some people ask me how the Lord speaks to me. Does He use an audible voice? The best way that I can explain this is when Jesus wants to reveal something to me, He overrides my thought process with His thoughts. I can be doing a task or thinking about

something in everyday life, but when Jesus is ready to talk, He stops every thought and takes over my attention and starts giving me revelation. I have heard other Christians say that they have to get alone with God or have a “prayer closet” or “secret place” to hear from God. I think that’s great that they have found a place to talk to God, but in my experience, when Jesus is ready to show me something, He will reveal it to me regardless of where I am at or what I am doing.

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? (John 14:22).

Just like the Bible says, He makes sure I can easily understand it (James 3:17). I haven’t had to ever use a verbal language or “special tongue” to talk with Jesus, or Him with me. He just takes your thoughts captive to His thoughts (1 Corinthians 2:14-16).

While I am on the subject, I would like to describe what the rest of my prayer life is like. After my conversion and tasting of the heavenly fruit and feeling the power of the world to come, I had a long list of prayers and petitions that I thought it would take to finally start to straighten out my messed up life. As time went by, the list got shorter and shorter. What I noticed though was I wasn’t receiving the things that I was praying for, but Jesus was taking away the desire for those things, until all that was left was Him. My prayer experience now is not always me telling God what I need, but God telling me what I need. I also have found the one prayer that is guaranteed that cannot be consumed on your own lust and desires. It is the prayer you pray for someone else. The Bible says in James 4:2,3 why we don’t receive the things we pray for sometimes.

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts (James 4:2,3).

The Bible says that the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends (Job 42:10). The Bible also says to seek another man’s wealth or wellbeing (1 Corinthians 10:24).

I also want to share about another experience that I now have that I didn’t have before. Since the circumcision event I have been able to communicate with other Christians in a spiritual language that I haven’t heard any pastors speak of. The words I use are of the English language, but when I talk about spiritual things to another Christian and a non-believer that doesn’t have the Holy Spirit as an interpreter listens in also, they say things like, “Wow, that’s deep” or “I can’t grasp that” or “you are speaking over my head”. Paul in 1 Corinthians speaks of this spiritual language or tongue.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: (1 Corinthians 2:6,7).

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we

speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:12-14).

I have many friends that are in Pentecostal churches that "speak in tongues" that is some other language than English. I can't understand what they are saying unless they or someone else interprets. They claim this language as evidence of being baptized in the Holy Ghost, but did Paul agree with this?

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:27-31).

I have never spoken in this type of tongues as they do, but being "born of the Spirit", I can speak about spiritual things in the Bible using plain English that many people receive with joy in their heart as "deep" revelation. Is not this spiritual communication also a result of the Holy Spirit as we read in 1 Corinthians 2:12-14?

I want to share another interesting experience that I have. Now that I could hear Jesus' voice, he spoke to me constantly.

Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice (John 18:37).

When I go to bed, I sense His presence, and He talks to me when I am asleep (Job 33:14-18), when I wake up he is there, all day long he is there. In my experience, I have not been able to escape Him!

Once again, when a Christian talks about being in the presence of the Lord in this world, they are referring to direct access to the Father through the Holy Spirit that indwells them, until their physical body is quickened to enter that spiritual world.

For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; (Romans 1:18,19).

I became a prisoner of Jesus Christ. But one day all the revelations did stop. One day I didn't hear his voice anymore. Then the next day came, and He was again silent. I could always feel His presence, but He would no longer speak. I went into a panic! What could I have done that could have made Jesus stop speaking to me? Since I was not under conviction for any sin, I started to ask for forgiveness for anything that I might have done that would cause a break in fellowship. I didn't fully understand then that my total

fellowship with God was based solely on the blood of Jesus and not on my obedience or disobedience. The next day came and I still did not hear His voice. By this time I thought that He might have given up on me and I was really down. The next day, the revelations started again just like always, but then Jesus revealed what had happened.

Jesus used that experience to show me that the reason He was fellowshiping with me and showing me the mysteries of the kingdom, was not because of anything that I was doing, whether good or bad, but just because He wanted to! This taught me a valuable lesson. No matter what I tried to do, good or bad, I could not manipulate God. He was fellowshiping with me because He wanted to, not because He had to. Talk about feeling special! That experience made me feel like my purpose in life and my relationship with Jesus, was the most important purpose ever bestowed upon man. I also realized that He must also do this with all of His disciples. This has happened other times since then, but I don't panic anymore and the revelations eventually return.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: (Philippians 1:3-6).

I have also heard people say that they have bound God to His Word. By speaking the Word of God, they believe that they can control the actions of God or force God's hand to move in their life by applying His Word. This might work great for them, but in my experience, I have not found anyway to manipulate God with His Word or otherwise. If I don't "allow" God to do something in my life, He does it anyway. If I "allow" God to do something He doesn't. I have never found anyway to eclipse God's sovereignty. In my experience, God decides to do something in my life and then does it, whether I "allow" Him to or not. How can the vessel tell the potter how to create it? If I stray from God's will, he steps in against my will with correction of disobedience, not condemnation of sin, because condemnation of sin always demands the death penalty, and that has already been paid in full by Jesus Christ.

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost (Luke 15:4-6).

A shepherd that has a sheep that goes astray doesn't slaughter it when he finds it, but carries it back to the flock, REJOICING!

An example of this is, if you found your child playing with a loaded gun, you would step in as a parent and take away the gun whether your child wanted to "allow" you or not. It would be your duty as a parent if you loved that child not to let them continue in destructive behavior. In fact the Bible says that God corrects and chastens the sons and daughters whom he receives. If you are without this correction, then the Bible says that you are not even children of God.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons (Hebrews 12:5-8).

These scriptures also prove that sons and daughters of God can be disobedient and still be sons and daughters. This is because we are sons and daughters of God by the spiritual “new birth”, not by obedience. The obedience comes as a result of the new birth. The divine order is first receiving a heavenly Father, before receiving correction from your heavenly Father. This is just like your natural children, they didn’t chose you as their parent, whether born naturally to you or adopted into your family, you chose them. My heavenly Father knows how to make better decisions for my life than I do. I have already experienced a messed up life created out of my decisions. It was a living hell.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3).

The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath. (Proverbs 15:24)

Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations (Isaiah 14:9).

Point to Ponder: I want to share a unique thing that I uncovered in my Bible studies about the prayers of the saints in Revelation. I know that when the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, it goes directly to God. The Holy Spirit being one of the Trinity, it cannot go anywhere else. But do our personal prayers go directly to God also?

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints (Revelation 5:8).

I have one question. Why do the twenty-four elders have the saint’s prayers in vials? Could this be the reason that some think they have to pray to other saints instead of through Christ? I just thought you might find that interesting, but don’t dwell on it. What I do in prayer when I have a petition to God is I go to the throne of grace through the Holy Spirit in Jesus name.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; (1 Timothy 2:5).

The Bible does say that our prayers can be hindered also.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered (1 Peter 3:7).

The Bible also says that the answer to our prayers can be hindered.

Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days (Daniel 10:12-14).

