

Chesterfield Seventh-Day Adventist Church Prayer Meeting 2023

Theme: Seeking Revival

8 February 2023 - JESUS' MOST PRECIOUS GIFT

(reading taken from "10 Days of Prayer 2021")

"How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13).

I Have Nothing

"Lord, teach us to pray!" the disciples pleaded. They saw how Jesus connected daily with His Heavenly Father and longed for the same power in their own lives.

Jesus responded with a memorable prayer lesson in three parts: the Lord's Prayer, the parable of a friend coming at midnight, and—in climax—the need to continually request the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:1-13).

In the parable (verses 5-8), a man has nothing to feed a visitor who arrives late in the evening. The man hurries to his neighbor and asks for bread to feed the visitor, explaining, "I have nothing." He continues asking until at last he receives bread to share with his guest. In this story we see that we have to come to Jesus in order to have something to share with others. When we want to pass on the Bread of Life, we often realize that we have nothing to give!

Then Jesus links the problem in this parable (*I have nothing*) with our need to request the Holy Spirit: "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you" (Luke 11:9).

Jesus Invites Us: Keep Asking

Here in Luke 11, Jesus emphasizes 10 times that we should ask for the Holy Spirit in our lives. I know of no other passage where He so lovingly urges us to take something to heart.

"So I say to you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who **asks** receives, and he who **seeks** finds, and to him who **knocks** it will be opened. If a son **asks** for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he **asks** for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he **asks** for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being 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!" (Luke 11:9-13).

In these few verses, Jesus uses the verb *ask* six times and emphasizes the idea with *seek* two times and *knock* two times. These are all action verbs. He clearly shows that we must take action in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The last use of *ask* is in the Greek continuous tense, meaning that we should ask not just once but keep asking—continuously. Clearly, Jesus wants to awaken our desire for the Holy Spirit with this heartfelt invitation. He knows we are missing something crucial if we don't continually ask for the rich blessings of the Holy Spirit.

In *Christ's Object Lessons* we read, "God does not say, Ask once, and you shall receive. He bids us ask. Unwearyingly persist in prayer. The persistent asking brings the petitioner into a more earnest attitude, and gives him an increased desire to receive the things for which he asks" (p. 145).

And consider for a moment, why did Jesus Himself spend so much time in daily prayer? Ellen White explains, "Morning by morning He communicated with His Father in heaven, receiving from Him daily a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit" (*Signs of the Times*, Nov. 21, 1895).

Indeed, Jesus was our example in this. Ask yourself: If Jesus needed a daily refreshing from the Holy Spirit, then how much more important is it for me?

Testimony and Challenge from a Church Member

"For the past two years I have been praying daily for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in my life. . . . My walk with God has been unbelievable. The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 has become more visible in my life since I asked Jesus to live in me, to do His will in me, and to daily renew me with the Holy Spirit. I have greater joy in reading the Bible and sharing Christ with others, and I have a strong desire to pray for others; furthermore, my lifestyle has changed dramatically. . . . I challenge you to pray daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit for six weeks and see what happens" (C.H.).

Praying God's Word

Why don't we have more answers to prayer?

"Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:2, 3).

Dear Heavenly Father, please forgive us for neglecting to ask continually for the Holy Spirit. Thank You that if we confess our sins, You are faithful to forgive them.

Our request shows how much we value God's offer.

"If you then, being 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!" (Luke 11:13).

Dear Father, thank You for promising to give us the Holy Spirit. We ask for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit now, and we thank you for answering. Teach us to rely on this promise.

God wants to give us life in abundance!

"'He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive" (John 7:38, 39).

Dear Lord, thank You for granting rivers of living water to those who believe in You. Please help us to live in daily, continual surrender to Christ so that You can fulfill this promise in our lives.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Ask God to bless the efforts of our local, regional, and world church.

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Spirit of the Living God (#672); Sweet, Sweet Spirit (#262); Fill My Cup, Lord (#493); Sweet Hour of Prayer (#478); Come, Holy Spirit (#269).