



Romans 8 Pt. 7: Prayer

Romans 8:26-27 *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.*”

We take medicine to be healed. I would even say that people spice up a roast so that when they eat it, the savory flavor is heightened. There is a reason that we do things. Nobody generally does something to harm themselves. Our actions come from a reaction. Parents hate so we hate things. A dog bites us and we might hate dogs. Everything happens for a reason and because of a reaction. I could call this a law of consequences. In the world of Christianity, we have a law that Paul names the Law of the Spirit. What are the consequences of that law?

Everything we desire is known by God. How does that work? Verse 27 gives us a hint. *“He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit.”* Then there is more *“the Spirit intercedes for Gods people.”* From Verses 1 through 25 (of Romans 8) we have Paul making a case that the Spirit of God works in those who believe. This Spirit talk ends in verses 26-27. Why? It’s because the point and case have been made. Those who walk by the Spirit will know God. Conversely God will know them. I believe our two verses today are saying that the Spirit does not just sit inside of us going for a ride in a human body. This Spirit is active. It knows us. It tells God about us. Conversely, the Spirit tells us about God. Yet, how does this all work together? It’s in prayer.

The remaining verses of Romans 8 contend that the Spirit binds us and we cannot be torn apart from God because the Spirit is mightier than anything. There also appears to be a wall between God and us. Someone must intercede for us to God the Father. However, that is not totally true. There is one thing that can get through the Spiritual wall: it's prayer. Romans 8:5 *"Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.* As children of God, we have the mind of the Spirit. Since God is Spirit, He can talk the same language to the Holy Spirit. How can we? It's through the prayer language that is translated from human to Spirit. This is one of the roles the Holy Spirit of God has.

Does that mean that the words of unbelievers are nonsense to God? It's not that way. At church I can talk with my pastor. We do speak the same language. Yet, if I talk about the tech side of ministry our communication breaks down. He is not a tech. When we pray, the Spirit breaks down our thoughts and heart's desire into words that God the Father can respond to. Are we talking "in Spirit" to God? Jesus made this very clear in the Gospels.

Luke 12:12 *"for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."*

Matthew 10:20 *"For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."*

The Holy Spirit is called many things. He is a comforter, councilor, interpreter, and teacher. His source is God. What Jesus thinks and God the Father desires are available to him. What we think and what we desire is also available to the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:11 *"For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."* So why should we pray if the Spirit already knows us and what God wants? It's because God wants the best of both worlds. He loves to bless His children. Yet, His will is to love the world through us. Prayer is a marriage between those two things. In the middle is the Spirit working it out.

Matthew 24:4-5 *"And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. 5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray."* At the end of verse 8 it mentions

birth pains. This might be a stretch but we groan in effort. We groan in exhaustion and birth pains. Is the Spirit working tirelessly between God's will and our desires? Is this Spirit a bell hop that is required to meet our needs? To me it's more about making things fit. Paul mentions a saying "*first to the Jew and then to the gentile.*" The Spirit works first for the Lord's plan and then for the will of creation. Then the Spirit is working to make us see that plan and will of God. To help us adjust our will towards Gods will. We know humanity. That must be a tough job. Hence, the groaning. Our thoughts, and desires do play a small role.

The Holy Spirit groans and He does the heavy lifting to make it all fit. It knows what we desire because this Spirit resides within us who believe. Verse 26 of Romans 8 "*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.*" We would pray for money, power, or sinful things. It's our human nature. Yet, the Spirit shows us a better way that fits the will of God. There is a lot to unpack in these verses. God has given us insight into how prayer works. People think it's about kneeling or praying for an hour. Should it be done 5 times a day? What if prayer through the Spirit was more about giving the Spirit time to help us see Gods will through our human tendencies? Maybe, we need to humble ourselves on our knees? Take an hour to listen to the Spirit? I can hear the Spirit groaning because (as humans) we don't like doing that, to know what God wants. Instead, we tend to groan because the Spirit isn't doing what we want. Help make the Spirits job easy today by praying for Gods will to be done in your life.