

My Notes 9-19-2023 Tuesday Study

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Our Helper The Holy Spirit

[Romans 8:24-26](#) For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

26 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.

We're going to take it up with the 24th through the 25th versus a bit of repetition from last week. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope for what a man seeth, why doeth he yet hope for. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

So last week we ended with the thought that the Bible gives us so much hope. You know, there's these passages that you find in so many places here in [1 Peter 3:15](#) there's the reasonable hope, remember that were to give an answer to every man that asketh us, for the reason of hope that dwelleth in us with meekness and fear. So we do have a reasonable hope this is not some kind of pie in the sky by and buy. This is we have a we have a reason to hope. We have an assurance and confidence. So it's not a false hope. Then there's the purifying hope in [1 John 3 :2-3](#) where it says he that hath this hope in himself purify himself, even as he is pure that speaks of seeing Christ, and being changed from glory to glory. Everybody knows that we're waiting for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ found there in [Titus 2:13](#), and the living hope, or actually it says the lively hope, but it's a living hope, that is alive and that's found in [1 Peter 1:3](#) Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and better hope that we have in [Hebrews 7:19](#) Which is the anchor of the soul and the unseen hope that we're seeing here in [Romans 8:24](#) Hope that is seen is not hope, but what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for, but if we hope for that we see not, then do we, with patience, wait for it, and we certainly have to speak of the eternal hope of all the hopes in [Titus 3:7](#). Of course we're

talking about the hope of eternal life and hope of eternal life with God. That cannot prompt, Li promised before the world began. So as you can see here, we have a category of hope just from those seven or eight passages that I just gave you. So it's a hope that is reasonable and assured to us.

So I want to move on from that concept here and let's go to the latter part portion here in the [Romans 8: 25](#) where it says, but if we have, if we hope for that we see not, then do we, with patience, wait for it. So now we speak of patience, and that this is one of the great virtues true to the Spirit, as a matter of fact and good. [Galatians 5:22](#) So we have love, Joy, hope, patience, long-suffering is essentially the same as hoping and waiting patiently for something. So with patience, we wait again it's a confident waiting. This is not just a waiting., and at the end we'll be disappointed. This is a this is worth waiting for. In [James 1:4](#) it speaks about this and anybody that ever planted a garden knows that you can't get the fruit overnight. You have to wait it it? There's a season in which we have to do our part and then after this we have to wait to see the results. [James 5:7-8](#) speaks of it in regards to the husbandman or the farmer, so be patient therefore, brethren, at the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it until he received the early and latter rain. Be also patient. Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh so he's always could be. He puts that before us as it were. It's our great motivator. We know the Lord is coming and so whatever we may have to endure here is momentary, and the sufferings of this world not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed also we learned in this 8th chapter. [James 1: 4](#) And let patience have her perfect work that you may be perfect and entire wanting nothing, note the notion here, of course, is that we submitted after so long a time. We wait and learn to trust that God's ways are the best ways. Our will then becomes crucified, and it becomes wedded to the will of God. So thy will be done is the most perfect prayer that has ever been uttered by our Lord there in the garden in [Luke 22:42](#), and of course, exemplary to all of us as to how to pray and that that is to submit all things to the will of the Almighty. Thy will be done, and so we let patience have her perfect work. It's a perfecting work and maturing work, and the mature Christian learns that God is good in the end He will make all things work together for good. So let patience have her perfect work that you may be perfect and entire wanting nothing. Of course I've taught you before, I think many times about this word perfect here, and there's absolute perfection and that only God has, and then there is relative perfection, and the word here is a Greek rooting Teleioo, and Teleioo speaks of maturity. It speaks of coming to fruition, as it were, and so that's not absolute perfection in the sense of sinless perfection. So God is still working on each one of us and he's the master and he's chiseling away all the flaws in our character and nature. It was said of Michelangelo that when he began his various sculptures that he could look at a piece of marble, and he could visualize what he could make of the marble. He could see it before he even laid the chisel to the stone, and in a sense the Lord is the great chiseler, you know, and he sees us, and He knows us in our initial form and what it's going to take to knock off all of the various sinful attributes that we have

and perfect us and mature us as believers, this all is a patient work, and so I used this picture of the sculptor. You know, one false move and one false blow of the hammer, and the work is ruined. So he has to do what he does meticulously and quite carefully and quite patiently. So thank God that God is patient with us during the process. [James 5:10-11](#) has a lot to say about patience, as you can see here. Now we have the fifth chapter, where it gives illustration. Take my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercies. So well the study of Job happened to be reading Job. Right now in my daily reading and you know. We have to be amazed at what he endured when he went through, and all the while understanding that the the ancients, the Patriarchs they did not have an indwelling Holy Spirit. We have a unique advantage and the fact that the Spirit dwells in us, and secondarily that we have the corpus of scripture, it's all done. They have nothing, but the word that God would share and that there was a great paucity of divine revelation. God would speak here a little and there a little, so certainly didn't have daily conversation, but their faith is exemplary to us as they suffer affliction and go through what Job went through, and so we speak almost axiomatically of the patience of Job, that we should have the patience of Job and we marvel at the at the end of Job, and we see that God restores him fully, and so we can expect the same reward once we step into the glory land. Paul is, I believe, the divine writer of the book of Hebrews, and he has so much to say of patience, and let's not forget all that he had to endure in this worldly daily needs a list of his various sufferings. In Second Corinthians, but here in Hebrews, he says in [Hebrews 10:35-37](#) Cast not away, therefore your confidence which have great recompense of reward. For you have need of patience that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. So there's great expectation here. We recognize again that if we don't know the day nor the hour, we don't we we waiting patiently, and we have enough. It suffices us to know that he that shall come will come, and so he's on his way, even though it may seem 2000 years is a long time to wait, but he will be here in his due time, but later in the book of [Romans 12:12](#) we have also this rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation continuing instant in prayer. We think of those that are in communist countries like China and North Korea, and the suffering that those believers are enduring and what they're going through at this particular time, but they have the same promises that we have, and that is to be patient in tribulation. When we bring to mind what they endure compared to what little things we have to go through, we're almost embarrassed by our complaint. I have this poem that I read on occasion that I think speaks of waiting for the end result. It's called

The Masters Weavers Plan

My life is but a weaving between the Lord and me. I mean not choose the colors, he

knows what they should be. For he can view the pattern upon the upper side. While I can see it only on this the underside. Sometimes we he weaves and sorrow, which seems so strange to me, but I will trust his judgment and work on faithfully to see who fills the shuttle, and he knows what is best, so I shall weave in earnest, and leave to him the rest. Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles ceased to fly shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why. The dark threads are as needed in the weavers skillful hand. As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned.

Later, I don't think we'll get to this, this week, but you're going to find this, what I call, you know, a paration or the end, and conclusive statements of the 8th chapter of Romans., and the conclusion is. [Romans 8:35-39](#) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake, we are killed all the day long counted as sheep for the slaughter? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors to him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities. Nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So we have a lot to say when we get to that, obviously, but this is just a reminder that tribulations, and distresses of this world we are to patiently endure with the confidence that he'll make all things work together for good, and we're building towards that 28th verse right now. All right, well, moving to the 26th verse of the 8th chapter. 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. We had already addressed the strange pronoun itself. Here we know that the translators understand the spirit to be in the masculine. Normally the the Holy Spirit would be seen as a masculine pronoun, but because of the particular construction here, the expression the nuclear expression was employed, but there are many other places in our translation that gives himself the spirit himself. So we won't go back and reiterate that, but let's not trip up over that. Likewise, the Spirit also help with our infirmities. I have the word on underlined here helpeth because this is one of the appellations of the Holy Spirit is that he is a Comforter, a helper. The one that comes alongside, and this is such a valuable comfort to us to know that we have the indwelling of a comforter. So, [John 14:16-18](#) Jesus in the Upper Room discourse. Shares the grand revelation of the third person of the Godhead, and thus he says, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter. In case you missed it, we have there the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit right there in that the phrase I Jesus will pray to the Father, and He will send another comforter. So we see the three right here. There are those that argue, because the word trinity doesn't appear in the Bible, that there's no such thing as a trinity, but where the word doesn't appear, the concept is everywhere, and sometimes embedded in text like this, and we can easily just read over it without contemplating the unity of the three. So we in this case we have to remember what we studied weeks ago about the economic trinity. So the economic versus the ontological, that hopefully you remember the lesson on this so ontologically, is we have the Unity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,

and these three are one, and that is their character and nature ontologically, and yet we see them all in a diverse manner in their economic as they accept their roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and we see that clearly here in this text. So we have the the Son praying to the Father to send the Spirit that he may abide with you forever again, we might just read right over that without understanding. The promise here is eternal life that the Spirit wants. Abiding does not leave the word itself abide he's going to stay, and he stays with us forever, which I was sharing yesterday with a fellow that is probably close to dying, but he he mentioned this concept that the Lord's promise is to never leave us, and to never forsake us even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not remember the concept of faith and hope. It's unseen faith and hope. So faith is the substance of things, hope for the evidence of things not seen. The earlier text in Romans says hope that is seen is not hope. So in other words, it's all unseen hope and faith. So we see it here again, kind of announced in this discourse even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because they seeth him not. Neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. So we see the translators here taking some liberties and capitalizing the name Comforter. So it's nominative. One could say, well no, it's just descriptive, but no, no, this is his name, so one of many names for the third person of the Trinity, the Comforter, and so they rightly capitalized, though the Greek language has no capitalization, but it belongs here, and you can see just as certainly as the nominative Father is capitalized and Spirit of Truth capitalized, so we have them as being names. This word comforter is the Greek word parakletos, which is an intercessor. A helper counts through advocate, a defender, and in its literal sense mean one who comes alongside, and how wonderful it is to have friends that come alongside of us in our times of need, and this friend never leaves us nor forsakes us. In the study of systematic theology, you will have a portion of any systematic theology will be regarding the study of the Spirit of the Holy Spirit, and it's rightly called pneumatology. It's taken from the Greek root, pneuma spirit. So it's the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and particularly the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit pneumatology goes all the way back to the third verse of [Genesis 1](#). So very early on, we see the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the deep. So it's not as though he suddenly appears in the New Testament, but there's certainly an advantage that Jesus just spoke of. He shall be in you the indwelling of the Holy Spirit., and thus we see him now as a comforter, one who literally comes alongside, and comes within, and advocate in our behalf. You know this passage or this word is actually used also in [1 John 2:1-2](#) it says My little children these things right I unto you that you sin not If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. So an Advocate as a Parakletos., but we see that in first John you know and this is the the wonderful nuances of the Greek language and how it can be used in various contexts. And the translators understood the nuance here, and so they in the place. In [John 14:26](#) he's a comforter. He's going to come, and abide with you. He's going to live in you, and thus becomes a helper in that sense, but in first John Two, we see that in a forensic context, a legal context, an advocate. He's coming alongside in the courtroom. He's

there to advocate our defense. So it's kind of a different way of seeing it. So you know, definitely translated to here. So we have Comforter in one place and Advocate in the other, but all this is our indwelling hope that we have of our helper who's going to come alongside, and Jesus promised I would not leave you comfortless. Let's take a little closer look of this concept our helper spirits ministry. To us, it's personal it's permanent. So he intercedes for us, and he guides our prayers we find right in our text here, he counsels us according to truth. [Isaiah 11:2](#) says, And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom, understanding the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Again, there's that passage about him being a comforter to us. He's also a convictor of sin in [John 16:8](#) When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He's here to make us holy, and such were some of you but your wash, but your sanctified, but you're justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. He is a teacher and director of truth. Again, he shall teach you all things. This is found in that discourse in [John 14:15-16](#) Upper Room is about the Holy Spirit, and he's coming here to teach us. He's the ultimate teacher, and we depend on him to rightly divide the word of truth. Certainly he's come to empower us to deliver that truth. [Acts 1:8](#) But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me. Let's take also a look at these appellations, these various descriptive names. Here he's called the spirit of Life, and we learned this earlier on in [Romans 8:2](#) For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death, and we have the Spirit of grace and [Hebrews 10:29](#) that they did despise under the Spirit of grace. You know, the offer of salvation was given to 1st century Jews and they some of them decided to apostatize and they went back to the temple worship. We also have Spirit of Prophecy [Revelation 19:10](#) Worship God for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, and that spirit of prophecy could certainly also be capitalized as nominative, and here is another place where you see the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and in the immediate context, then, he's called the spirit of truth in [John 14:17](#) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive. He's called the Spirit of Holiness [Romans 1:4](#), and declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead is called the Spirit of supplications. In [Zechariah 12:10](#) And I will pour upon the House of David, upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications. He's called the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, [Ephesians 1:17](#) That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. Again, it is a Trinitarian construction, here the Father, Son, and Spirit. Then the spirit of justice or judgment [Isaiah 28:6](#) And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate, spirit of fire or burning. So Isaiah says, when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment and by the Spirit of burning. The Spirit of glory. So we have this in [1 Peter 4:14](#) If you be reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye. For the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. Then we have the Spirit of the living God. In [2 Corinthians 3:3](#) Forasmuch as you are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ,

ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the Heart. Then [Hebrews 9:14](#) we have the eternal Spirit. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God. Purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God, and well, obviously, he's also called the Holy Spirit, [Ephesians 4:30](#) And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you're sealed unto the day of redemption. Just been teaching a little while back, I think maybe in Isaiah where we have the expression whose name is holy. So we have the the trine blessing. You know when Isaiah hears these seraphims and they're singing holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory while we have. Three Holies there, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all three of them are whose name is holy. You know, and I hear people say this all the time and sure we talk about better speech, better language watching what you say, being careful about employing filthy words and euphemisms and you don't hear people say all the time, they'll say holy cow, and then just hearing somebody the other day using the expression wholly and then they used the C word for human feces. And I think to myself, what are you? Why would you use the word holy? To speak of a cow or a human dung, why would anybody use an expression like that? Now again, people learn from just hearing in the the world, I suppose, and we adopt various verbal constructions, but we'd better be careful what we're seeing. The name of God is holy, and for anyone to speak, and say a holy cow or a holy piece of human feces shame on us. Now these are types of things again that we they become part of an ingrained part of our vocabulary, and people find it hard to get rid of it once it's there, but it can be gotten rid of, and I think if you're using such expressions that you, you better stop because I think it's offensive to God only God is holy, and to use any other expression of holiness to referring to something else other than God, I think is blasphemous. All right so there's this wonderful song we sing at church. Come, Holy Spirit. Dark is the hour we need your filling your love and your mighty power move now among us stir us, we pray come Holy Spirit revive the church today. So likewise the Spirit also our helpeth our infirmities. So what's he helping while he helps in so many ways and we've just seen that, but now in particular, [Romans 8:26](#) is referring to our infirmities. The spirit in helping our infirmities. So we might want to look, you know, put the magnifier on that word, and look into Strongs concordance and see what we have. In that valuable lexicon in the back where we have this word infirmities in Greek = astheneia, and it means the absence of strength are infirmities. It means a condition of helplessness without him, want of strength and capacity requisite to understanding a thing. So these are the expanded understandings of a single word. Infirmities. Oftentimes we think of someone infirmed as being sick. There's much more to the word here, as you can see in the Greek, and it bespeaks our human condition, and our helplessness, and so that the Lord comes in the Spirit to help our weaknesses, and to give us strength and to give us some courage and metal in the midst of all this craziness going on around us, and further is this Infirmities do things great and glorious to restrain corrupt desires. This is this is how he helps our infirmities. To understand, to do things great and glorious. To restrain corrupt desires, to bear trials, and troubles this is what the believer has at great advantage, because the spirit lives within us. Now we speak also of, you know, when it

says he's helping our infirmities. It speaks of our weakened condition here, and those that are weak he makes strong. It's what he's always promised to do, and it's not until we acknowledge our weakness that we can be made strong. If we're standing in our own might, to the devil we're pushovers, let's face it, but if we stand in his great might, then we can have the power to overcome, and [Isaiah 40:29-31](#) What a passage this is. S, He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increases its strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, in the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord. We all know this one, don't we? But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as Eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. So glorious promise here of course this is the Undefeatable God in whom we serve. The Indefatigable Undefeatable Christian that God has provided this kind of inner strength through the Holy Ghost. So, soldiers of Christ, arise and put your armor on strong in the strength which God supplies through His eternal Son strong in the Lord of hosts, and in His mighty power. Who in the strength of Jesus trusts is more than conqueror? Stand then in his great might with all his strength and dude, and take to arm you for the fight, the panoply of God, but having all things done and all your conflicts passed you may come through Christ alone, and stand and tire at last. Leave no unguarded place, no weakness of the soul. Take every virtue, every grace, and fortify the whole from strength to strength. Go on, wrestle and fight and pray. Tread all the powers of darkness down, and win the well fought day. So of course all this yeah this hymn Charles Wesley gave to us is just marinated in scriptural concepts, and the idea that the Holy Spirit comes to help our weaknesses and to strengthen us, and to give us spiritual medal, and to give us the power to say what needs to be said and stand for Christ. So that's as I go and preach wherever I'm going, I always hope and pray for his power to go before me, I'm going to be preaching here in another hour. So I look to the Lord and hope that he's going to meet me there. People sometimes will even say to me, well, what are you gonna preach? And I said, well, now how would I know what I'm gonna preach I would expect that the Lord is going to meet me there. If he doesn't meet me there, then it's just I think just an operation in vanity we've got. We've got to have the Lord helping our infirmities. We have nothing to offer. We have to stand in his great strength if we expect to tread all the powers of darkness down and win the well fought day, then it'll have to be the Lord who gives us the victory. We just preached on this Sunday night to be strong in the Lord and the power of His might, where we think of the great panoply of God, or the armor that we have to put on at the strength that we need to overcome our adversary. Let me see here there, [Joshua 1:9](#) Have not I commanded the? Be strong and of good courage. Be not afraid neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest. So we see these strong men of the Bible and these people that had faith and and faced what would you'd have to consider to be impossible odds and faced it and faced it down with the power of God. This they do, by the way, in the Old Testament the Spirit would come upon them, but not live within them. So we'd have to say we have the greater advantage today with the completed work of Christ on the cross and His sending of the Comforter to our hearts. No excuse, then for us to be weak. We should be strong people in the Lord. [Romans 4:20](#) So Abraham was strong in faith and gave glory to God. The Apostle

Paul speaks about those who are strong and they take they take the strong meat, and they discerned between the the good and the evil, and this is where I think the Church at large is so lacking no discernment. So we don't, we don't have the power to know and understand right from wrong, and yet we have a clear indictment from the scripture, there's no doubt about that, what God has put down his prohibition, and and yet there are people that are wandering about and not sure not clear, and that's so very, very sad. We need to be strong in our convictions, and what we believe in. [1 Corinthians 16:13](#) Watch stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong, and strong in grace, because all of this has to be tintured with the grace of God. [2 Timothy 2:1](#) Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. We can become a rather inured and hardened people, and God wants our hearts pliable, and the grace of God makes that possible. Certainly strong in the Word, which is why we are assembling here this morning, so that we can be strong in the Word, and as you see here in [1 John 2:14](#) I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and you have overcome the wicked one. All right, back to our verse that we're kind of taking almost line by line. [Romans 8:26](#) Likewise, the Spirit also help with 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. So we know not what we should pray for as we ought. That's curious expression, isn't it? So we might pose the question why? Well, that they do not know what would be really best for us. So this is taken from Albert Barnes notes on the Bible. If any of you are interested. I think Barnes is an able Scholar and it can help you in a lot of different ways, and I think most of his writings, rather plain and simple enough, so wouldn't be a bad purchase. Or course you don't have to purchase any of this anymore, It's all online for nothing isn't that something what we have at our fingertips? That they so, So why? Well, it's because,

(1) They do not know what would really be best for them.

(2) They do not know what God might be willing to grant them.

(3) They are to a great extent ignorant of the character of God, the reason of his dealings, the principles of his government in their own real needs.

(4) They were often in real, deep perplexity. They are encompassed with trials, exposed to temptations, feeble by disease, subject to calamities. In these circumstances, if left alone, they would neither be able to bear their trials nor know what to ask at the hand of God.

So you can see here what would the argument is that the with the Holy Spirit within us he sanctifies us, and sanctifies our knowledge, and yeah, it tells us how to pray and leads

us in our prayers, and they were often in real, deep perplexity. They are encompassed with trials, exposed to temptations, feeble by disease, subject to calamities in these circumstances, if left alone, they would neither be able to bear their trials nor know what to ask at the hand of God. And that's a pretty good explanation for this rather curious expression. We know not what we should pray for as we ought. So when we come to that line in [1 John 5:14](#) that we ask according to his will. That this is one of the conditions for answers to prayer. We know that he heareth us if we ask according to his will, and it's critical for us to have our prayers sanctified. [James 4:3](#) You ask and receive, not because you ask amiss that you may consume it upon your lusts. That's a rather harsh statement, but the idea here is that we have selfish inclination. and our prayers tend to be this is what I want, when again, the perfect form of prayer is not my will, but thine be done that we want to be able to pray according to the will of God, and so we need the spirit who lives within us to inspire that. Even in the Old Testament, when we find those various penitential prayers and prayers that were offered up by Daniel, and offered up by Ezra, and offered up by Nehemiah, and Moses. These are prayers that were sanctified and directed by the Spirit of the living God. So we want to come to that place. We know not what we should pray for, as we ought and depend on the Spirit to guide. So be careful for nothing, [Philippians 4:6-8](#) says, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

One of the grandest places in the Bible, isn't it? There is a small pamphlet, almost that you could call it a little booklet, maybe 100 some pages. That's entitled How to Pray by R .A. Torrey, and in it we have read this years and years ago, and it was very helpful because there was a chapter in this book called Hindrances to Prayer, and he makes points here at about what could be restraining the the answer, and here I have verses that I had just spoken of.

[James 4:3](#): "You ask and receive not because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts," And then he goes on to explain his selfish purpose in prayer robs prayer of power. Very many prayers are selfish. These may be prayers for things, for which is perfectly proper to ask for things which it is the will of God to give. But the mode of the prayer is entirely wrong, and so the prayer falls powerless to the ground. The true purpose and prayer is that God may be glorified in the answer. If we ask any petition merely that we may receive something to use in our pleasures or in our own gratification in one way or another. We ask amiss and need not expect to receive what we ask. This explains why many prayers remain unanswered. Later in that book, I think he gives the illustration of a wife that prays for the salvation of her husband, and it's right enough to pray for her. Any intercessory prayers? Correct. We pray for all men first. [1 Timothy 2:1-3](#) tells us, but he suggests that the wife may be praying to get that answer because life would be easier for her if her husband was saved, and so the motive would be wrong

rather than praying that he be saved, that God would be glorified in the salvation of a lost person. So that's an illustration of asking a miss, so to speak, and thus a hindrance to prayer, and thus the need for the Spirit to help our infirmities, because we know not what we should pray for as we ought, or at least even how to pray.

[Isaiah 59:1-2](#) Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is he or heavy that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you. That he will not hear sin hinders prayer. Many a man praise, and praise, and praise, and gets absolutely no answer to his prayer. Perhaps he is tempted to think that it is not the will of God to answer. Or he may think that the days when God answered prayer. If he ever did, are over. So the Israelites seemed to have thought, they thought that the Lord's hand was shortened, that could not save, that his ear had become heavy, that it could no longer hear.

Well, another hindrance that he brings up here in [1 John 3:22](#) whatsoever we ask, we receive of him because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing this site. Living a godly life brings the needed answers. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. So as long as we hold on to sin or have any controversy with Go, we cannot expect him to heed our prayers. If there's anything that is constantly coming up in your moments of close communion with God, that is the thing that hinders prayer. Put it away. Now, what I've done here, by the way, in this presentation of R. A. Torrey has just taken a few lines from each hindrance, but he goes on here for several pages on each one of these hindrances. So I'm just giving you kind of a preview of it, and if you're really interested in hearing more. You you can again you can get this copy very easily. How to Pray by R. A. Torrey.

Another hindrance, he says here, and of course he bases his [Ezekiel 14:3](#): Son of Man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put their stumbling block of their iniquity before their face. Should I be inquired of all at all by them? Idols in the heart cause God to refuse to listen to our prayer. What is an idol? So an idol is anything that takes the place of God, anything that is the supreme object of our affection. God alone has the right to the supreme place in our hearts. Everything and everyone else must be subordinate to him.

Then another hindrance that he brings up here in [Proverbs 21:13](#), "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard." So there's perhaps no greater hindrance to prayer than stinginess, the lack of liberality toward the poor and toward God's work. The one who gives generously to others who receives generously from God. So [Luke 6:38](#) Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For

with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. The stingy man is the powerless man of prayer. That's something to consider. That's an unusual part then.

[Mark 11:25](#) And when you stand praying, forgive if you have ought against any that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. An unforgiving spirit is one of the commonest hindrances to prayer. Prayer is answered on the basis that our sins are forgiven, and God cannot deal with us on the basis of forgiveness while we are harboring ill will against those who have wronged us. Anyone who is nursing a grudge against another has fast closed the ear of God against his own petition. Certainly something to consider as well.

Then he cites this in [1 Peter 3:7](#) Likewise he husbands dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of lot of life, that your prayers be not hindered. Here we are plainly told that a wrong relation between husband and wife is a hindrance to prayer, and many a case the prayers of husbands are hindered because of their failure of duty toward their wives. On the other hand, it is also doubtless true that the prayers of wives are hindered because of their failure in duty toward their husbands. If husbands and wives should seek diligently to find the cause of their unanswered prayers. They would often find it in their relations. To one another.

Then also he brings up [James 1:4-8](#) But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavered is like the wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed, but let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. Prayers are hindered by unbelief. God demands that we shall believe His word absolutely. To question it is to make Him a liar. Many of us do that when we plead His promises, and is it any wonder that our prayers are not answered? How many prayers are hindered by our wretched unbelief? We go to God and ask Him for something that is positively promised in His word, and then we do not more than half expect to get it. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. Then an obvious one is praying in the name of Christ. It was a wonderful word about prayer that Jesus spoke to his disciples on the night before his crucifixion. Whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. Prayer in the name of Christ has power with God. God is well pleased with his Son Jesus Christ. He hears him always, and he also hears always the prayers that he is really that is really in his name. There's a fragrance in the name of Christ that makes acceptable to God every prayer that bears it.

Then praying according to the will of God. I think I mentioned this earlier. So we have [1](#)

[John 5:14](#) It's one of the most abused passages in the Bible. This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he here with us, and if we know that He hears us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him. God has revealed His will in His Word. When anything is definitely promised in the Word of God, we know that it is His will to give that thing, and then finally.

In this chapter he brings up the praying according to the will of God and [Romans 8:26](#) Likewise the Spirit also help with our infirmities for we know not to pray as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. He that search up the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God. Here we are distinctly told that the Spirit of God prays in us, draws out our prayer in the line of God's will. When we are thus led by the Spirit, in any direction to pray for any given object. We may do it in all confidence. That it is God's will. So those are some interesting snippets that I took, so to speak, from How to Pray, and again, there are several lines and paragraphs that come after these. I just took the main thought, and so, if you're really interested, you might look this up, and again, you might easily find it online. How to Pray by R. A. Torrey. So there's different kinds of prayer and intercessory prayer that we find in [First Timothy 2](#).! pray first of all that prayers, supplications, giving of thanks, intercessions be made for all men. To kings and to all that are in authority over us, that we might live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness, and this is, of course, intercessory prayer. You're praying for something at somebody, and particularly in this case, those that have the rule over us, and to pray for their salvation. That's clear in these three verses of First Timothy, but then there's confession. So confession enjoined in [1 John 1:9](#) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. So that's certainly an aspect of prayer. Thanksgiving, while we find [Philippians 4:6-7](#) Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God, and that also that passage speaks of petition. There make our request known, and to God, which is an aspect of prayer importunity which is found in [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#) and the idea here is to pray without ceasing. So the idea of continuity in prayer and the continuing to ask and not giving up, and finally, imprecatory prayer which is. What we find so often in the Psalms, and these are these are prayers that are reserved for those of holy disposition who can pray condemnation upon their enemies. I put here never enjoined because I'm not sure that any of us really qualified to be able to pray in precatory prayers. Best for us to consider our own selves and the infirmity of our own flesh. We don't need to be praying God's judgment down upon people, but we find it in the Old Testament as a form of prayer, and again, it's really done in a holy nature, and in a sense I'd have to say the imprecatory psalms, the seven imprecatory psalms in the Old Testament, are Messianic. They're speaking of the Messiah, and he could and right rightfully bring down condemnation, and judgment upon people, because he was purely holy. Alright, so again we're back to this passage. It will keep giving, by the way, so, but the Spirit itself make

you the intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, so we saw that earlier. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and just maybe a reminder there that.

We have in this translation itself, so auto to pneuma, which must be rendered itself, not himself. Because spirit is a neuter noun and neither masculine nor feminine, you cannot have a male emphatic pronoun himself modify the neuter noun pneuma. So it's just good grammar. That's that's what this is all about. There are other places, again in the Bible where the masculinity of the Spirit is clearly identified, and [John 14:15-16](#) He is used in that construction because grammatically it sound and this particular construction, the spirit here has to be a neuter noun, and so that's that's really the explanation. For itself, so that it doesn't confuse any of us and I wanted to do some detail when we were in [Romans 8:16](#), and a number of weeks ago so we won't belabor the point.

All right well that brings us pretty much to the end of the study today. So let's pray. Now, Lord, we thank you for all the good things that you give to us. Your word is certainly enlightening to us, and it helps us to grow in grace. This chapter, Lord, yields so much of fruit when we speak of handfuls of promise, almost every verse is a handful. Now help us to be good expositors of it and good students of it, and to rightly divide it, and to apply generously to our current situation. We're quick to acknowledge our infirmities, Lord, and our weaknesses, and our great need, and you were quick to supply the remedy for those that need by sending your spirit to our hearts. It's up to us now not to grieve that spirit, but to be filled with it, and to be used to view in some fashion or in this world of ours that is now coming apart morally. We ask, Lord for great revival in our own hearts, and then Lord, that we might be able to influence those that are about us. Let us bring them to a quickness and a conviction that they might be saved. Lord, it is our true and lasting hope in Jesus name Amen.

From the book How To Pray by R. A. Torrey

1. The first hindrance to prayer we will find in [James 4:3](#), “Ye ask and receive not *because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures.*” (R. V.)

A selfish purpose in prayer robs prayer of power. Very many prayers are selfish. These may be prayers for things for which it is perfectly proper to ask, for things which it is the will of God to give, but the motive of the prayer is entirely wrong, and so the prayer falls powerless to the ground. The true purpose in prayer is that God may be glorified in the answer. If we ask any petition merely that we may receive something to use in our pleasures or in our own gratification in one way or another, we “ask amiss” and need not expect to receive what we ask. This explains why many prayers remain

unanswered.

For example, many a woman is praying for the conversion of her husband. That certainly is a most proper thing to ask; but many a woman's motive in asking for the conversion of her husband is entirely improper, it is selfish. She desires that her husband may be converted because it would be so much more pleasant for her to have a husband who sympathized with her; or it is so painful to think that her husband might die and be lost forever. For some such selfish reason as this she desires to have her husband converted. The prayer is purely selfish. Why should a woman desire the conversion of her husband? First of all and above all, that God may be glorified; because she cannot bear the thought that God the Father should be dishonored by her husband trampling under foot the Son of God.

Many pray for a revival. That certainly is a prayer that is pleasing to God, it is along the line of His will; but many prayers for revivals are purely selfish. The churches desire revivals in order that the membership may be increased, in order that the church may have a position of more power and influence in the community, in order that the church treasury may be filled, in order that a good report may be made at the presbytery or conference or association. For such low purposes as these, churches and ministers oftentimes are praying for a revival, and oftentimes too God does not answer the prayer. Why should we pray for a revival? For the glory of God, because we cannot endure it that God should continue to be dishonored by the worldliness of the church, by the sins of unbelievers, by the proud unbelief of the day; because God's Word is being made void; in order that God may be glorified by the outpouring of His Spirit on the Church of Christ. For these reasons first of all and above all, we should pray for a revival.

Many a prayer for the Holy Spirit is a purely selfish prayer. It certainly is God's will to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him—He has told us so plainly in His Word ([Luke 11:13](#)), but many a prayer for the Holy Spirit is hindered by the selfishness of the motive that lies back of the prayer. Men and women pray for the Holy Spirit in order that they may be happy, or in order that they may be saved from the wretchedness of defeat in their lives, or in order that they may have power as Christian workers, or for some other purely selfish motive. Why should we pray for the Spirit? In order that God may no longer be dishonored by the low level of our Christian lives and by our ineffectiveness in service, in order that God may be glorified in the new beauty that comes into our lives and the new power that comes into our service.

2. The second hindrance to prayer we find in [Is. 59:1, 2](#): “Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But *your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.*”

Sin hinders prayer. Many a man prays and prays and prays, and gets absolutely no answer to his prayer. Perhaps he is tempted to think that it is not the will of God to answer, or he may think that the days when God answered prayer, if He ever did, are over. So the Israelites seem to have thought. They thought that the Lord's hand was shortened, that it could not save, and that His ear had become heavy that it could no longer hear.

“Not so,” said Isaiah, “God's ear is just as open to hear as ever, His hand just as

mighty to save; but there is a hindrance. That hindrance is your own sins. Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you that He will not hear.”

It is so to-day. Many and many a man is crying to God in vain, simply because of sin in his life. It may be some sin in the past that has been unconfessed and unjudged, it may be some sin in the present that is cherished, very likely is not even looked upon as sin, but there the sin is, hidden away somewhere in the heart or in the life, and God “will not hear.”

Any one who finds his prayers ineffective should not conclude that the thing which he asks of God is not according to His will, but should go alone with God with the Psalmist’s prayer, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me” ([Ps. 139:23, 24](#)), and wait before Him until He puts His finger upon the thing that is displeasing in His sight. Then this sin should be confessed and put away.

I well remember a time in my life when I was praying for two definite things that it seemed that I must have, or God would be dishonored; but the answer did not come. I awoke in the middle of the night in great physical suffering and great distress of soul. I cried to God for these things, reasoned with Him as to how necessary it was that I get them, and get them at once; but no answer came. I asked God to show me if there was anything wrong in my own life. Something came to my mind that had often come to it before, something definite but which I was unwilling to confess as sin. I said to God, “If this is wrong I will give it up”; but still no answer came. In my innermost heart, though I had never admitted it, I knew it was wrong.

At last I said:

“This is wrong. I have sinned. I will give it up.”

I found peace. In a few moments I was sleeping like a child. In the morning I woke well in body, and the money that was so much needed for the honor of God’s name came.

Sin is an awful thing, and one of the most awful things about it is the way it hinders prayer, the way it severs the connection between us and the source of all grace and power and blessing. Any one who would have power in prayer must be merciless in dealing with his own sins. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” ([Ps. 66:18.](#)) So long as we hold on to sin or have any controversy with God, we cannot expect Him to heed our prayers. If there is anything that is constantly coming up in your moments of close communion with God, that is the thing that hinders prayer: put it away.

3. The third hindrance to prayer is found in [Ez. 14:3](#), “Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them?” (R. V.) *Idols in the heart cause God to refuse to listen to our prayers.*

What is an idol? An idol is anything that takes the place of God, anything that is the supreme object of our affection. God alone has the right to the supreme place in our hearts. Everything and everyone else must be subordinate to Him.

Many a man makes an idol of his wife. Not that a man can love his wife any too

much, but he can put her in the wrong place, he can put her before God; and when a man regards his wife's pleasure before God's pleasure, when he gives her the first place and God the second place, his wife is an idol, and God cannot hear his prayers. Many a woman makes an idol of her children. Not that we can love our children too much. The more dearly we love Christ, the more dearly we love our children; but we can put our children in the wrong place, we can put them before God, and their interests before God's interests. When we do this our children are our idols.

Many a man makes an idol of his reputation or his business. Reputation or business is put before God. God cannot hear the prayers of such a man.

One great question for us to decide, if we would have power in prayer is, Is God absolutely first? Is He before wife, before children, before reputation, before business, before our own lives? If not, prevailing prayer is impossible.

God often calls our attention to the fact that we have an idol, by not answering our prayers, and thus leading us to inquire as to why our prayers are not answered, and so we discover the idol, put it away, and God hears our prayers.

4. The fourth hindrance to prayer is found in [Prov. 21:13](#), "*Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.*"

There is perhaps no greater hindrance to prayer than stinginess, the lack of liberality toward the poor and toward God's work. It is the one who gives generously to others who receives generously from God. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." ([Luke 6:38](#), R. V.) The generous man is the mighty man of prayer. The stingy man is the powerless man of prayer.

One of the most wonderful statements about prevailing prayer (already referred to) [1 John 3:22](#), "Whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight," is made in direct connection with generosity toward the needy. In the context we are told that it is when we love, not in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth, when we open our hearts toward the brother in need, it is then and only then we have confidence toward God in prayer.

Many a man and woman who is seeking to find the secret of their powerlessness in prayer need not seek far; it is nothing more nor less than downright stinginess. George Müller, to whom reference has already been made, was a mighty man of prayer because he was a mighty giver. What he received from God never stuck to his fingers; he immediately passed it on to others. He was constantly receiving because he was constantly giving. When one thinks of the selfishness of the professing church to-day, how the orthodox churches of this land do not average \$1.00 per year per member for foreign missions, it is no wonder that the church has so little power in prayer. If we would get from God, we must give to others. Perhaps the most wonderful promise in the Bible in regard to God's supplying our need is [Phil. 4:19](#), "And my God shall fulfill every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (R. V.) This glorious promise was made to the Philippian church, and made in immediate connection with their generosity.

5. The fifth hindrance to prayer is found in [Mark 11:25](#), “And when ye stand praying, *forgive*, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”

An unforgiving spirit is one of the commonest hindrances to prayer. Prayer is answered on the basis that our sins are forgiven; but God cannot deal with us on the basis of forgiveness while we are harboring ill-will against those who have wronged us. Any one who is nursing a grudge against another has fast closed the ear of God against his own petition. How many there are crying to God for the conversion of husband, children, friends, and wondering why it is that their prayer is not answered, when the whole secret is some grudge that they have in their hearts against some one who has injured them, or who they fancy has injured them. Many and many a mother and father are allowing their children to go down to eternity unsaved, for the miserable gratification of hating somebody.

6. The sixth hindrance to prayer is found in [1 Peter 3:7](#), “Ye husbands, in like manner, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered.” (R. V.) Here we are plainly told that *a wrong relation between husband and wife is a hindrance to prayer*.

In many and many a case the prayers of husbands are hindered because of their failure of duty toward their wives. On the other hand, it is also doubtless true that the prayers of wives are hindered because of their failure in duty toward their husbands. If husbands and wives should seek diligently to find the cause of their unanswered prayers, they would often find it in their relations to one another.

Many a man who makes great pretensions to piety, and is very active in Christian work, shows but little consideration in his treatment of his wife, and is oftentimes unkind, if not brutal; then he wonders why it is that his prayers are not answered. The verse that we have just quoted explains the seeming mystery. On the other hand, many a woman who is very devoted to the church, and very faithful in attendance upon all services, treats her husband with the most unpardonable neglect, is cross and peevish toward him, wounds him by the sharpness of her speech, and by her ungovernable temper; then wonders why it is that she has no power in prayer.

There are other things in the relations of husbands and wives which cannot be spoken of publicly, but which doubtless are oftentimes a hindrance in approaching God in prayer. There is much of sin covered up under the holy name of marriage that is a cause of spiritual deadness, and of powerlessness in prayer. Any man or woman whose prayers seem to bring no answer should spread their whole married life out before God, and ask Him to put His finger upon anything in it that is displeasing in His sight.

7. The seventh hindrance to prayer is found in [James 1:5-7](#), “But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask *in faith, nothing doubting*: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” (R. V.)

Prayers are hindered by unbelief. God demands that we shall believe His Word absolutely. To question it is to make Him a liar. Many of us do that when we plead His

promises, and is it any wonder that our prayers are not answered? How many prayers are hindered by our wretched unbelief! We go to God and ask Him for something that is positively promised in His Word, and then we do not more than half expect to get it. "Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."