Help When We Need It Most

“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. 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. “ Romans 8:26-27

Quick Question
All of us like to feel “on top of things” in life, spiritually and in every other way. But when have you felt most inadequate as a Christian? (It’s okay – you can be honest!)

Video Teaching Segment
NOTES
As you watch the session six video, use the following outline to think about ideas that stand out to you.

• The Brooklyn Tabernacle’s “engine”

• “Saying prayers” vs. praying from your heart in faith

• What does “Spirit-filled” look like?

• Vital signs from Acts 2:42-47

• A Spirit-filled church (or person) is ...

• When you don’t feel like praying

• Two ways the Spirit helps us pray: 
“When the Spirit of God is working, he always guides us to the throne of grace. How? By constantly revealing to us our weakness and failure – where we’re not acting like Christ. Others might be patting us on the back; the Holy Spirit instead shows us our need of Christ and leads us in that direction.”

From the video

Group Discussion and Bible Study

1. When in your own experience have life’s pressures grown so strong that you felt driven to prayer?

2. Read Romans 8:26-27. Like Paul, have you ever felt at a loss for words while praying? What happened then? Tell the story.

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3. Pastor Cymbala draws a strong link between a church’s prayer life and its awareness of the Holy Spirit. How so? What’s the connection there?

“God’s first people were not called ‘Jews’ or ‘the children of Israel’ or ‘Hebrews.’ In the very beginning their original name was ‘those who call on the name of the LORD’ (see Genesis 4:26). On some unmarked day … at some unnoted hour … a God-placed instinct in human hearts came alive. People sensed that if you are in trouble and you call out to God, he will answer you! He will intervene in your situation.”

*Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, p. 54*
4. In two different epistles, the Bible urges us to pray in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20). What do you think this means?

5. How would you have reacted the night Diana Barrios showed up in church? Was this scene any different from what happened to Jesus or the apostles? (See, for example, Mark 1:21-28; Luke 9:37-43; Acts 8:4-8; Acts 13:4-12)

6. What is your greatest desire regarding the Holy Spirit? In what way do you most want to see him move in your life and situation?

“Since you were here I have been thinking of prayer – particularly of praying for the Holy Ghost and its descent. It seems to me that I have always limited God in this request ... I am now convinced, it is my duty and privilege, and the duty of every other Christian, to pray for as much of the Holy Spirit as came down on the day of Pentecost, and a great deal more. I know not why we may not ask for the entire and utmost influence of the Spirit to come down, and, asking in faith, see the full answer.”

_Last letter written by Daniel Nash, little-known prayer partner of Presbyterian evangelist Charles G. Finney, before Nash’s death in 1831_
“God is not dead; he’s still alive. And what he’s done through the centuries when people have prayed, he can still do today. Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to come and grant us a new spirit of prayer in our churches, in our small groups, and in our individual lives.”

From the video

Personal Journey –
For Your Individual Use between Sessions

The Bible gives us several examples of desperate people pouring out their hearts to the Lord, as the Holy Spirit enabled both fervency and faith. Take these one at a time; read the account, noticing the passion engendered by the Spirit.

Then adapt each prayer to your own voice. Call on the name of the Lord for yourself. Implore him to meet your needs, and praise him for his answers to come.

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<th>The Bible Passage(s)</th>
<th>The Bible Prayer</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Samuel 1:9-20; 2:1-10</td>
<td>Hannah’s prayer for a child – and subsequent response.</td>
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<td>Psalm 51, especially v. 11</td>
<td>David’s prayer after making a stupid mistake.</td>
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<td>2 Kings 19:14-19</td>
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<td>Ephesians 1:15-23; Phillippines 1:3-11; Colossians 1:9-12</td>
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