

Romans Part 19A: SPECIAL STUDY ON PRAYER PART 1

--INTRO:

--last week in Part 18 of our Romans series we looked at how cultivating intimacy with God is one of the key aspects of walking in the Spirit and overcoming our flesh.

--the essence of cultivating intimacy with God, and anyone for that matter, is *communication*, of which prayer is an integral part...

COMMUNICATION WITH GOD
<p><i>listen to God communicate to you through...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">--His Word (the Bible)--His Spirit--active involvement in our lives
<p><i>communicate to God through...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">--prayer--following His Word (<i>actions speak louder than words</i>)

--we can't fully understand every aspect of prayer, but Scripture gives us clear and simple principles to follow in prayer.

--and the Holy Spirit, in a sense, prays along side us, compensating for the imperfections in our prayers...

--Romans 8:26: "Likewise **the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses**. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but **the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered**."

--you might think, *why even pray if the Holy Spirit can pray on our behalf*; but again, the answers to this question and others that you might have about prayer, which we'll try and get a better grasp on through principles taught in Scripture, involve dimensions of reality that don't always make sense to our natural way of thinking; but just because we can't understand something doesn't mean it isn't valid or real.

--THE ROLE OF GOD THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD IN PRAYER...

--even though the Father, Son, and Spirit are all God, they each have distinct roles in prayer.

--**God the Father...** prayer in the New Testament is primarily addressed to God the Father

--Matthew 6:9: Jesus said, "In this manner, therefore, pray: **Our Father in heaven**, Hallowed be Your name..."

--Ephesians 3:14: the apostle Paul said, "For this reason I bow my knees **to the Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

--Colossians 1:12: "...giving thanks **to the Father** who has **qualified us** to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."

--**God the Son...** in the New Testament, God the Father is addressed through the Son, as we have peace with God through Jesus.

--John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except **through Me...**'"

--Colossians 3:17: "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father **through Him**."

--Romans 1:8: "First, I thank my God **through Jesus Christ** for you all..."

--Hebrews 10:19-21: "Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest [*the presence of God in heaven... the Father and Jesus at His right hand*] by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith..."

--Hebrews 4:14-16: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest [*Jesus Christ*] who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore **come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**"

--the Spirit of God... we are literally connected to the Son and the Father in heaven through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, and through this connection we can pray to the Father through the Son.

--Ephesians 2:18: "For through Him [*God the Son*] we both have access **by one Spirit** to the Father."

--Jude 20: "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, **praying in the Holy Spirit...**"

--Ephesians 6:18: "...praying always with all prayer and supplication **in the Spirit...**"

--Romans 8:15: "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received **the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'**"

--Ephesians 2:19-22: "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being **built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.**"

--addressing God by His name...

--while prayer in the New Testament is primarily addressed to God the Father; there are instances where God is addressed in prayer as "LORD", which could refer to either the Father or the Son...

--etymology of the word LORD (all capitals) in the Bible:

--when speaking to Moses at the burning bush, God called Himself the "I AM" represented by the Hebrew word *YHWH*.

-Exodus 3:13-14: "Then Moses said to God, 'Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they say to me, "What is His name?" what shall I say to them? 14 And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you.''"

--by calling Himself the *I AM* He was essentially saying that is the "self-existent one", the one upon whom all of creation is dependent.

--it became practice among Old Testament Jews not to pronounce the sacred name *YHWH*, but instead substitute "Adonai", which is translated "LORD" in English. "LORD" is spelled in all capitals when referring to *YHWH*.

--"Yahweh" and "Jehovah" are transliterations of *YHWH*

--Jesus is referred to as the "LORD", as in Jehovah, and also the "Lord", as in a ruler:

--many other passages in the New Testament refer to Jesus as "Lord", as in a king or ruler in a general sense.

--Jeremiah 23:5-6 directly identifies Christ as being the LORD: "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD [*God the Father*], "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness [*the Messiah, the Son of God*]... 6 Now this is His name by which He [*the Son of God*] will be called: **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS [*Jehovah Tsidkenu*].**"

--Hebrews 1:8-10: "But to the Son He [*God the Father*] says: 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever... 10 You, **LORD**, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.'

--Romans 14:10-11: "For we shall all stand before **the judgment seat of Christ**. 11 For it is written: '**As I live, says the LORD, every knee shall bow to Me**, and every tongue shall confess to God.'"

--Jesus identified Himself as the LORD when He said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **before Abraham was, I AM**." (John 8:58)

--the Jews knew what He was saying and therefore accused Him of blasphemy and tried to stone Him (the capital punishment for blasphemy)... "Then they took up stones to throw at Him..."(John 8:59)

--**God the Father is referred to as the "LORD"**, as in Jehovah, all throughout the Old Testament, but Psalm 110:1 (quoted in Acts 2:34-36) speaks of LORD as being God the Father in clear distinction from the Son:

--Acts 2:34-36: "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: **The LORD [God the Father]** said to my Lord [*God the Son*], "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

--addressing God in prayer as LORD...

--Romans 10:13: "For 'whoever calls on the **name of the LORD** shall be saved."

--because LORD is related to the name of God ("I AM"), calling Him LORD is, in a sense, calling Him by His name...

--Hebrews 13:15-16: "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks **to His name**."

--and of course calling Him "Jesus" is calling Him by His name...

--in the New Testament "Lord" is used instead of "LORD" when not quoting directly from the Old Testament...

--1 Corinthians 1:2: "...to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place **call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**."

--Ananias addressed God as "Lord"... Acts 9:10: "And he said, "Here I am, **Lord**."

--Acts 7:58-60: "And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "**Lord Jesus**, receive my spirit."

--Revelation 22:20: "...He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, **come, Lord Jesus!**"

--INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD...

--back to Romans 8:26: "Likewise **the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses**. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but **the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered**."

--when we pray there is a sense in which we enter the dimension of intertrinitarian communication... just like Jesus prayed to the Father while on earth, so to the Holy Spirit living inside us prays to the Father.

--*In a way infinitely beyond our understanding, these groanings represent what might be called intertrinitarian communication, divine articulations by the Holy Spirit to the Father.* – commentary by John MacArthur

--**the simplest concept to grasp in the realm of prayer is intimate relationship...**

--Jesus didn't just pray to the Father to transfer information to Him, but rather Jesus often prayed to the Father because He wanted to talk to Him whom He loved..

--Luke 5:16: "He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed."

--saying that we don't need to pray to God because He already knows our prayers before we ask is comparable to a husband and wife telling each other, "I don't need to say that I love you anymore because I already told you that I love you the day we were married..." OR "talking takes too much time... instead of talking lets just send each other a quick email each day with the information we need to exchange."

--God loves us and wants us to talk to Him... when we neglect Him, in the words of James 4:5 "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously".

--Romans 8:15: "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" (Romans 8:15)

--*Abba Father* is an informal Aramaic term for Father that carries the meaning of intimacy, tenderness, and dependence; *Abba Father* occurs only three times in the entire Bible, twice referring to our relationship with the Father and once referring to Jesus' relationship with the Father --in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus addressed God the Father, as *Abba, Father* (Mark 14:26)

--*side note*: "Abba Father" is recorded in Mark, but Matthew and Luke merely state "Father" ... this difference can be attributed to differences in style and translation from Aramaic to Greek (the Gospels were written in Greek but Jesus spoke in Aramaic... Mark's placement of the Aramaic term along side the Greek word for "Father" emphasises the intimate nature of Jesus' address to the Father)

--Galatians 4:6: "God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'"

--Romans 8:11: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through **His Spirit who dwells in you.**"

--the Greek word *Oikeo* is translated "dwells" and carries the meaning of being in one's own home, opposed to simply being in a place like work. **The Holy Spirit has made His home with us... He doesn't just dwell in us impersonally as if away from home at work!**

--FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS IN PRAYER...

--Jesus didn't only pray to the Father in divine ways that can't be put into words, but His recorded prayers provide simple examples that we can follow and relate to on a human level, such as expressing burdens to God, interceding for others, praying according to God's will, praying Scripture...