

# Messages on Corporate Prayer #17-19

by Stephen Kaung

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*Stephen Kaung emphasizes the power of corporate prayer, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the church's unified response to challenges in faith.*

**Duration:** 1:12:36

**Scripture:** Psalm 19:14, Acts 4:23-31, Romans 8:26-27

**Topics:** "Corporate Prayer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of prayer and being available to the Holy Spirit. He shares a story about a little girl playing the piano and how a man joined in to make beautiful music with her random notes. This story illustrates how the Holy Spirit can work through us when we are open and yielded to Him. The preacher then discusses the challenge faced by the early church and how they responded by praying with one accord, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and standing together against opposition. He encourages the listeners to take up the challenge of the upcoming conference and pray for God's enablement to accomplish His purpose.

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## Transcript

Acts chapter 4 verse 23. And having been let go they came to their own and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. And they having heard it lifted up their voice with one accord to God and said, Lord thou the God who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, who has said by the mouth of thy servant David, why have the nations raged haughtily and the peoples meditated vain things? The kings of the earth were there and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ.

For in truth against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the nations and peoples of Israel have been gathered together in this city to do whatever thy hand and thy counsel had determined before should come to pass. And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings and give to thy bondmen with all boldness to speak thy word, in that thou stretchest out thy hand to heal, and that signs and wonders take place through the name of thy holy servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

To me I feel that this passage, which is on corporate prayer, is one of the most wonderful passages in the scripture. If we only think of the setting that Peter and John, they were just threatened. Threatened by the

council to shut their mouth and not to speak in the name of the Lord Jesus.

After they were released, they came to their own, and they reported what had happened. And then the scripture said, and they having heard it, lifted up their voice with one accord to God and said. Now we know that at that time in Jerusalem there were thousands of believers already, because on the day of Pentecost, aside from the 120, you'll find 3,000.

And then before this incident, you'll find more were added as we find in the preceding verse. And many of those who had heard the word believe, and the number of the men had become about 5,000. So you see there are thousands of believers there.

And they lifted up their voice with one accord to God. Not a few, not even a hundred, but thousands of them. And they lifted up their voice with one accord and prayed.

Now in the find there are many places where prayers are recorded. But most of these prayers are prayed by one person. For instance, Paul, he prayed, and his prayer are recorded.

Daniel prayed, and his prayer is recorded. Mostly you'll find all the recorded prayers are personal prayers. That is prayed by one man.

But in this instance you'll find the Holy Spirit recalls the prayer of the church. Thousands of people were praying. And they prayed in such a manner that the Holy Spirit is able to recall their prayer.

Why? Because they prayed with one accord. Or to put it another way, they prayed as one man. If you read the record of their prayer, you'll find a divine order there.

It's a perfect prayer. It's not organized beforehand. It's not a prayer of one person.

Now if one person is praying, probably you will find it's comparatively easy to pray in this manner. But thousands of people are praying. And the Holy Spirit recalls their prayer as if only one man is praying.

And it is. And you'll find a perfect order in the prayer. First of all, they declare that God is the God of the heaven, and the earth, and the sea.

And then they quote the scripture, Old Testament, and find its fulfillment in the life of our Lord Jesus. That founds the, that sets the basis of their prayer. And then they mentioned what had happened.

And after that, they asked God to give them boldness to speak. It is as if only one man is praying. There is no discord.

There's no diversions. Now we are few here. But when we are praying, can the Holy Spirit record our prayer in this manner? Will it be that one will pray for this, and one will pray for that, and one will think of this, and one will think of that, and we jump around, and you know, and it will be all discord.

But here you find the Holy Spirit, when He recalls that corporate prayer, it is a perfect prayer. Now if it is not the Holy Spirit who is in charge, now who can do such a thing? And these people were really given to the Lord, that the Holy Spirit is able to pray through them in such a manner that there is perfect order. And you notice that they lift up their voice.

Now in the original, it is voice, singular. In some version, it put voices. But I like the singular.

Because they lifted up their voice. Only one voice. So many people, but only one voice.

Now I do not think that at this occasion, thousands of people, they all lifted up their voices and prayed. You know, sometimes we do. As a matter of fact, I was brought up under that kind of situation, because I was born, I was saved among the holiness people, and we all pray together.

Everybody pray his prayer, but we all pray together, and nobody hear anybody, you know. But I do not believe this is what happened there. Because they lifted up their voice.

Only one voice. But that one voice was carried by many people. It was not Peter who was praying.

It was not John who represented the whole company and prayed. No. They lifted up their voice with one accord.

So it must be that the Holy Spirit will touch upon different people, many people, and all their prayers, you can see that there is a sequence, there is an order, you can connect all these prayers together, and it comes out to be a perfect prayer. And that is Corporate Prayer. That is the first recorded Corporate Prayer of the Church.

So I often think that this is a marvellous passage, if we know the background, it is a marvellous passage. When the Holy Spirit is really in charge, and He should be, and He is, because wherever two or three are gathered together, the Lord said, there am I in the and how? By the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is here.

He is representing the head. And He is directing the body to pray. So whoever may be used by the Holy Spirit at the moment, they are not just praying their own prayers.

They are praying the prayer of the head. And that is the reason why you will find there is such harmony, there is such agreement, there is one accord, no jarring notes, everything just fit in, and the Holy Spirit is able to record it. Now what if everybody pray his prayer? Now how will the Holy Spirit record it? If He records John's prayer, it won't be Peter's prayer.

But now you will find the Holy Spirit is able to record it as the prayer of the whole Church. It is a tremendous, it is a tremendous thing. And I do believe, sincerely, that when the Holy Spirit is really in charge, and if we are really submitted to the Holy Spirit, this is what happens.

Now unfortunately, sometimes we do not submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit. That is, when the Holy Spirit touches upon a certain brother or sister, he refuses to cooperate. And if that happens, then of course you'll find, and sometimes the Holy Spirit hasn't touched upon a person, and he stops to pray.

So you see here, the whole company was so yielded, available, you know. Now when we come together to pray, are we available to the Holy Spirit? Have we decided that we are going to pray tonight, or we are not going to pray tonight? Are we really available? Are we really open? Do we allow the Holy Spirit to really pray through us? And if we do, you find the proof here. The way that we pray, it really is marvelous.

Now here you'll find there is a challenge. The church was challenged. Not just Peter and John.

Even though only Peter and John were threatened, but actually you find that this challenge was against the whole church. And the whole church took up that challenge. Now how did they take up the challenge? Not by matching the world with their own cleverness.

Not by fighting against the world with their own power, but by turning to God and praying. So prayer is the weapon of the church. This is the way that we meet every challenge.

If there is any challenge to the church of any kind, whether it is a threatening just like Peter and John, or whether it is something else, but a challenge nevertheless. And we know that the church is always being challenged. Negatively or positively.

And when we are challenged, what do we do? The only recourse we have is to go to pray as a church. The church is to take up any challenge with prayer. Not with discussion, not with negotiation, confrontation, you know, but with prayer.

And that is what we should do. You know, any challenge that comes to us, we'll take it up and turn it into prayer. And as they pray, you'll find they have absolutely absolutely no desire or no idea of retreating.

But on the contrary, you'll find all they ask of the Lord is that the Lord would give them boldness to speak. Now the council said shut your mouth, but they asked the Lord for boldness to speak. Why? Because they have a mandate.

The Lord had given them that mandate that they should be his witnesses from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria to the end of the world. And because they have a mandate, therefore they ask the Lord to give them boldness to speak in the name of the Lord Jesus. And what is the result? The result you'll find that the place literally shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, not just a few, but they were all filled. Why? Because they prayed with one accord. Every one of them was filled with the Holy Spirit.

And not just boldness given to the apostles, boldness given to all. And that is the way that God answered prayer. So as we come together tonight, I really feel that, you know, there are many challenges before us.

Just to mention one I think is evident. The conference is a challenge, you know. It is not a challenge just to a few.

It's a challenge to the whole church. And we really need to take up that challenge and pray that the Lord will enable us to stand and withstand and stand. Enable us to utter His word, His will, and accomplish His work for that conference.

There's a conflict there. The enemy is trying to shut us up. But we have a mandate from heaven.

And we need to ask the Lord to give us boldness to accomplish His purpose. So we definitely have a challenge here. And we need to lift up our voice with one accord to God.

And if we do, you know what will happen? We will all be filled with the Holy Spirit. People who do not take up the challenge, people who do not pray, they miss the blessing too. But if we really give ourselves to prayer, when the blessing comes, we will be included.

So may the Lord really encourage us as we are week after week, you know, uh, laboring as it were, preparing for the conference. And as the conference is within this month now, it's almost on us now. And we haven't prayed enough.

We really need to continue to pray and meet the challenge that His name may be exalted. This concludes message number 17. Message number 18 follows.

Romans chapter 8 verses 26 and 27. And in like manner the Spirit joins also its help to our weakness. For we do not know what we should pray for as is fitting.

But the Spirit itself makes intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. But he who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he intercedes for saints according to God. To understand these two verses, we need to uh, keep these two verses within its context.

And if you notice in the preceding verses, how the whole creation groans for that day. And how even we who are the first fruits of the Spirit, we also groan in ourselves waiting for adoption. In other words, we find that the whole creation is groaning, is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

And those who are the children of God are groaning in our spirit for the same thing, that we may grow up into sonship. And under that kind of atmosphere, we find these two verses. And in like manner the Spirit joins also its help to our weakness.

We do feel that there is much infirmity, much weakness in us, as we think of this matter of sonship. That we may be conformed to the image of God's Son. That he may be the firstborn among many brethren.

And as we think of this objective before us, we do sense there is much infirmity in us. We find that lots of things around us, and even within us, are somehow trying to pull us down and slow our progress in the Lord, and hinder us from being changed, transformed, and be conformed to the image of Christ. So this weakness or infirmity is a general weakness.

In other words, we do feel within us, there is much weakness within us, in view of what the Lord is calling us, in view of what we are aspiring for. And of all the weaknesses, there is one weakness that is most evident, and that is the weakness in prayer. When we are surrounded by our circumstances that seem to be contradictory to that which God is calling us, this is the time that we can overcome with prayer.

And yet we find that in this area of prayer, we are the weakest. We know we should pray, we know that without prayer we cannot get through, but somehow we find that not only we do not know what to pray, how to pray, sometimes we do not even feel like to pray. This is the weakest of all our weaknesses.

And if it depends upon us to pray, and to pray through, I think it would be a very, very sad thing. But thank God for one thing, and that is, in our weakness, there is the Holy Spirit. You know, brothers and sisters, sometimes when we come to this area of prayer, we forget the Holy Spirit.

It is as if we must pray, we must struggle to pray, and we must pray the best prayer, the perfect prayer, the prayer that will touch God's heart, the prayer that will change our circumstances, the prayer that will change ourselves, the prayer that will move mountains and move even the heart and the arm of God. Oftentimes we think that, well, we have to depend on prayer, because we know we should pray. But we forget the Holy Spirit.

We forget that the Holy Spirit who dwells in us is to come to our aid in this very area of prayer. We tend to depend upon ourselves to pray, then depend on the Holy Spirit to pray. We may not be conscious of it, but we do.

We do neglect the Holy Spirit in our prayers. It says that in like manner, the Spirit joins also its help to our weakness. The Holy Spirit will help us in this weakness of prayer, but He is not going to substitute us.

Now, it doesn't mean that because there is the Holy Spirit, so He will pray for us. It is true. But the Spirit itself, making intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered, because He intercedes for saints according to God.

It is true that the Holy Spirit will intercede for us, but not in the sense that He will substitute us. That is, He will do it without ourselves involved. The Holy Spirit does not pray for us without ourselves praying too.

I think it is very evident that the Holy Spirit does intercede for us, but He intercedes for us in us. He who knows the mind of God will intercede for us according to God, but yet you find that God is the one who searches the hearts. It says, but he who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit.

So you find that our hearts and the mind of the Spirit work together. We are not praying alone, nor does the Holy Spirit intercede alone. It is the cooperation of our hearts with the mind of the Spirit.

In other words, we need to have hearts before God. Our hearts must be burdened, our hearts must be open, our hearts must be willing, and as our hearts are before the Lord, then the Holy Spirit who dwells in us will help us to pray according to God. If our heart is not there, we cannot expect the Holy Spirit to help us in our prayer.

Our heart must be there. Now in one sense we do know what to pray for, that is in a general sense, because in the general sense we know that we shall pray for the maturity, for the manifestation of the sons of God. We know that, but specifically we do not know.

We know in a general sense where the direction of prayer should be, but in particular occasions, in particular cases, we do not know what to pray for and how to pray for that is fitting. And this is the area when the Holy Spirit will come to our aid. If we have no heart before God, if we do not care whether we will grow spiritually, we will be transformed and conformed.

If we have no desire for the purpose of God, for the manifestation of the sons of God, then we cannot expect the Holy Spirit to help us in our prayers. But if we do have a heart for the Lord, for His interests, for His work in our lives as well as in the Church, also in the world, if our hearts are really burdened before Him and we do not know THE what to pray for, in the original there is a definite article there, in other words, not just in a general sense, but in a particular sense, we do not know exactly what to pray for and how to pray for that is fitting. Now this is the time that the Holy Spirit will come to our aid.

He will make intercession for us according to God. Now when we pray, we will pray according to what we feel, what we think. But when the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, He will intercede for us according to God.

Because He is God and God knows the mind of the Spirit. Sometimes it is unutterable, like a groaning which cannot be uttered. But other times it can be uttered.

So it doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit, when He is coming to our aid in our prayer, it has to be just groaning and unutterable. I know in some places people just try to groan. But that may be people who are groaning, not the Holy Spirit who is groaning.

You know, because people take hold of this verse. Now it is true, sometimes the Spirit is praying and our spirit is cooperating, but our mind does not have the understanding. Therefore it comes out as groanings which is unutterable.

That is true. But at other times, not only our spirit will respond to the Holy Spirit, but even the mind of the Spirit is made known to our mind. And when that is the case, we can pray intelligently.

We do not need to groan. We can utter with plain words. And the effect before God is the same.

So what we need to do is this. As we come together to pray, brothers and sisters, is our heart here? Is our heart open to the Lord? Is our heart willing or is our heart burdened? Now if our heart is open, willing and burdened, we will feel our weakness, because we do not know exactly how to pray, what to pray for that is fitting. Then we can trust the Holy Spirit to give us the direction, show us his mind, and even when we cannot understand it with our mind, still our spirit can cooperate with him.

So let's look to the Holy Spirit for help. I think it would be a great encouragement to us. You know, sometimes we hesitate to pray, because we don't know what to pray and how to pray.

But if we know that the Holy Spirit is with us, he is in you, ready to give you help, to aid you, to help you. If you just cast yourself upon him, and let the Holy Spirit come in as you cooperate with him, and you will find that he will intercede according to God. So I do hope that it will be an encouragement to us.

No one should feel that he knows how to pray. If we know how to pray or what to pray for, probably we are praying ourselves. If we are really burdened before the Lord, we have to acknowledge we have an infirmity.

We do not know. But that should not hinder us from praying. On the contrary, that should encourage us to pray.

If we just give ourselves to the Lord and trust the Holy Spirit, he is here, and he is waiting to pray in us, and for us, and through us. So may the Lord really help us tonight. This concludes message number 18.

Message 19 follows. Revelation chapter 8, from the first verse through the fifth verse. Revelation chapter 8, verse 1. And when it opened the seventh seal, there was silence in the heaven about half an hour.

And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer. And much incense was given to him, that he might give efficacy to the prayers of all saints at the golden altar which was before the throne.

And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints, out of the hand of the angel before God. And the angel took the censer, and filled it from the fire of the altar, and cast it on the earth, and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake. Heaven was prepared to make a move.

But before that move was made, there was silence in the heaven for half an hour. The silence was not because heaven was not going to make any move. Heaven was prepared to move.

But the silence was heaven must wait for something to happen before that move can be made. In other words, you'll find that everything was ready in heaven, but there was a suspense, waiting for something on earth to happen first. And what was to happen? The prayer of the saints.

Heaven was waiting for the saints to pray. And after there was prayer on earth, then you'll find heaven answered the prayers on earth. And immediately there was voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and earthquake.

The move began. It is the principle of prayer that God or heaven must initiate. You know, the prayer does not begin on earth.

Prayer is initiated in heaven. But after heaven initiates, it has to wait until the earth responds. And with the response in prayer, then heaven answers the prayer on earth.

So the principle of prayer is, it begins in heaven. Heaven discloses its will to some people on earth, to the saints on earth, because only the saints can know the will of heaven. So heaven has a will.

It reveals its will to the saints, waiting for the saints to take up heaven's will, and discharge it in prayer. Then heaven will answer the prayer of the saints, and do the things that heaven decides, has decided to do. And this, if you read Matthew 18, 18 in the original, that's what it really means.

Because in Matthew 18, 18, our translation is such, you know, as if heaven is waiting on earth to move. Verily, verily, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on the earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall lose on the earth shall be lose in heaven. Now oftentimes we think by reading this verse that the earth has to make the first move, and heaven will respond to the move upon the earth.

But in the original it is, verily I say to you, but that's not English, whatsoever ye shall be, ye shall, having been bound on the earth, no, whatsoever ye shall bind on the earth shall be having been bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall lose on the earth shall be, shall having been lose in heaven. That's the original. Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be having been bound in heaven.

Whatsoever ye shall lose on earth shall be having been bound, lose in heaven. Having been bound, having been lose, shall be and shall be. So in other words, actually heaven initiates, but then the earth takes this up in prayer, and then heaven answers the prayer on earth, and that is the order.

Now if we see this, I think we realize how important the prayers of the saints is. In other words, if the saints do not pray, even heaven cannot move. Whether the will of God can be done on earth, it depends very much upon the prayers of the saints.

God is waiting. Heaven is silent for half an hour, just to wait, to see whether the saints will respond, whether there will be prayers offered, whether there will be cooperation, sympathy of one mind of the saints with heaven. And after that is done, then immediately you'll find heaven will make that move.

So actually what we bind on earth has already been bound in heaven. What we lose on earth has already been lose in heaven, but the actual losing and the binding will not happen until we have bound and we have loosed, on the basis of what heaven has bound and heaven has loosed. Now that is the mystery of prayer.

A tremendous responsibility if we realize the significance of the prayers of the saints. Now because of such weight that heaven put upon the prayers of the saints, sometimes we feel overwhelmed. Now if heaven doesn't matter whether we pray or not, or our prayer doesn't really carry much weight for the will of God to be done on earth as it is in heaven, then probably we feel well we can pray.

But when we realize that heaven depends upon us to pray for its action, it almost overwhelms you. Who are we? What are the conditions of our prayer? Are our prayers also feeble? We do not know how to pray and what to pray for? And if heaven should depend upon our prayers, what should we do? Not only there is the thing of prayerlessness, we do not pray as we should, but even if we pray, even we ourselves know how feeble, how weak our prayers are. And yet heaven depends on our prayers.

There will be no movement. It's all silent, but everything is ready. Now what can we do? Now if we do not know the importance of prayer, probably we dare to pray.

But when we realize the significance of prayer, it really makes you feel, now what can we do? How can we pray as we should? Because heaven is waiting for us, is depending on our prayers. How can our prayers be effective, be effectual? Now this is where, in verse 3, and another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer, and much incense was given to him, that he might give efficacy to the prayers of the saints at the golden altar which was before the throne. The prayers of the saints need some strengthening.

So much incense was given to add to the prayers of the saints, and that gave his efficacy. In other words, the prayers of the saints are weak, ineffectual. So incense, much incense was given to give efficacy to the prayers of the saints, to make our prayers effective before God.

Now what are these incense? You know in Revelation chapter 5, the incense in Revelation chapter 5 verse 8, are the prayers of the saints. But the incense in chapter 8 verse 3, is added to the prayers of the saints. The prayers of the saints are like incense, ascending up to God.

But our prayers are too weak. Heaven cannot depend upon our weak prayer. So much incense was added to give efficacy.

Now if, according to the exegesis, interpretation, if incense in chapter 5 verse 8 refers to prayer, then the incense here in chapter 8 also refers to prayer. Now whose prayer? The prayer of our great high priest. Here you find our Lord Jesus, who is risen, who is ascended, our high priest, ever liveth, making intercession for us.

That is much incense. He adds his prayers to our prayers, and that gives his efficacy. So we know that our prayers, however weak we are, our prayers are, it will be answered, because there is one who adds his prayer to ours.

And you remember our Lord Jesus say in John chapter 11 said, you know, when he stood before, well we can look at it in John chapter 11, verse 41, and Jesus lifted up his eyes on high and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou has heard me, but I knew that Thou always heareth me. In other words, the prayers of our Lord Jesus are always heard. Even when he was on earth, now he is at the right hand of the Father.

How much more his prayers will be heard? His prayers add to our prayers, and that gives our prayers the efficacy that we need. So brothers and sisters, be encouraged. No matter how weak our prayers are, and even when we pray wrongly, when his incense is added to ours, it makes it right.

That gives us courage to pray. You know, on the one hand, when you realize the importance of prayer, you dare not pray. But on the other hand, when you see that is the work of a high priest, our Lord today.

He is, he ever liveth making intercession, never ceases. He put his prayers into our prayers. And when the smoke ascends, immediately thunders, lightnings, action begins.

You know, I can never forget, once on a steamboat, you know, in a big ship, in a state room, you know, there are pianos there, grand piano there. And the people, you know, were sitting there, you know, some reading and so forth. And a little girl, she climbed to the stool and started to play.

She didn't know how to play piano. She just hit, you know, the notes at random and make such noise, and people sitting in that state room and couldn't read and didn't know what to do. And suddenly a man stood up.

He went to that piano, sit down by the girl. And whenever that girl hit a note, he hit some notes to accompany it, make it beautiful music. And everybody just enjoy it.

And after a while, when the girl stopped playing, he stood up and said, you ought to thank that girl for the good music you have heard. That man is a musician. And I never forget that story.

Because every time I feel my prayers weak, I say, Lord, you accompany it and make it good. And every time when I speak, and I fail, I fail, that's the same thing I did. I say, Lord, make it good.

This is our courage, our confidence, our encouragement. So I do want to encourage brothers and sisters. Sometimes, you know, you do not dare to open your mouth.

In a prayer time like this, we want all the brothers and sisters to have a chance. Not always all a few brothers and sisters pray. Well, maybe they can pray better.

That's true. And you may not be able to pray as good as theirs. But the Lord knows, He will add much incense to your prayer.

Now, some brothers and sisters may pray very good, and the Lord may not add much incense to it. But if you don't know how to pray, the Lord will put more incense to it. So be encouraged.

You know, even if your prayer is wrong, it's not too good, you know, a few words, not much, you know, not very musical. But He will make it heavenly music. So be encouraged.

I do hope that every brother and sister should be encouraged to pray. Even if you don't know how, well, take it up when a brother is mentioned. Just take a look to the Lord and say a word or two.

And the Lord will add much incense to that. You know, and to heaven we're here. We're here.

So do encourage. Chapter 14. 1 Corinthians Chapter 14.

We'll just read three verses, 15, 16, and 17. 1 Corinthians Chapter 14. Verses 15, 16, and 17.

What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray also with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing also with the understanding. For thou indeed giving thanks well, but the other is not edified.

We know this chapter deals with the assembly of God's people. Therefore, what is mentioned here about prayer does not refer to our personal private prayer, but refers to corporate prayer as we come together to pray. And it is mentioned here that I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray also with the mind or with the

understanding.

Now, even though it is I who prays, even though it is individual who is praying, yet none prays as just an individual. In other words, I will pray, but as I pray, I'm representing all the brothers and sisters. The spirit of God may use me as his mouthpiece to utter a prayer, and yet when I'm praying, I do not pray as an individual.

I'm praying as representing all the brothers and sisters. And because of this, you'll find there are two things that are essential to such prayer. One is I must pray with the spirit, and the other is I must also pray with the understanding.

As we gathered here, we believe that the Holy Spirit is directing this time. It is important for us to remember whenever we come together to pray, that the Holy Spirit is here. He is directing us to pray.

Therefore, as the spirit moves upon different individuals, these individuals will respond with prayers. As the Holy Spirit gives burden to our spirit, as our spirit is burdened, then we pray. Maybe to put it in a more simple way, our prayer is not just lip service.

Our prayer must be from the heart. As our heart is touched by the spirit of God, then we pour out our heart before the Lord. But then because we are praying with our brothers and sisters, therefore we must not only pray with the spirit, we must also pray with the mind, that is with the understanding.

Sometimes you know our spirit is burdened, and as in Romans chapter 8, we do not know what to pray and how to pray, but the spirit within us will groan. But the groaning of the spirit is known to God, but not known to the brothers and sisters who may be with us. Therefore, when we come together to pray, not only our spirit must be burdened and touched, but we must utter our burden, discharge our burden with plain words, words that can be understood.

We understand what we are praying, and brothers and sisters must also understand what we are praying. Because we are praying in a representative way, not alone. If we are alone, we can pray with a spirit, and sometimes with groaning, unutterable.

But when we are praying with brothers and sisters, we have to pray with a spirit and also with the understanding. Because when we are praying, we expect our brothers and sisters to join in with Amen. This very fact that Amen is expected from the brothers and sisters proves that whoever is praying, he is praying for the whole company.

And as a person prays in the spirit and with understanding, then the brothers and sisters who hear such prayer, they will be touched by the spirit of God. And as they are touched by the spirit of God, they will respond with Amen. In other words, it is as if they are praying.

So when we pray together, if any brother and sister, when he or she is praying, and you find that you understand, and you are touched in your spirit, and you find that this is the very same thing, very same word you want to utter, very same burden that the Lord has burdened you, then respond with an Amen. Don't be silent. Now of course we do not need to shout so loud as to make the prayer unheard.

But we need to respond with Amen to show that we are one with our brothers and sisters. And what he is praying is what I will pray. And thank God that the spirit of God has used my brother or my sister as the mouthpiece.

And I fully agree to it. So whenever your spirit is touched, and you feel that this is what the Lord, what you will pray if you are given opportunity, then do not hesitate to respond with Amen. The very Amen will strengthen that prayer.

And to show that we are really praying as one. And of course when we are praying, we are praying to God. I think this is the first basic.

We are not praying to our brothers and sisters, even though it is so basic, but sometimes it does affect us. One way or the other, sometimes when we are praying, we are so conscious of our brothers and sisters that we try to put in some words for their sake, but it's a waste. And sometimes we are so conscious of our brothers and sisters that we do not dare to utter our prayer because we are afraid that we do not have that beautiful words to utter.

It is unnecessary. We are praying to God. As the spirit touches us, as we are burdened, we pray.

And we are praying to God, not to our brothers and sisters. But they are there. And they're over here.

And they are supposed to join in with your prayer. But I think there is a by-product to prayer. You know, of course, as we pray, we expect God to answer our prayer because we are praying to Him.

But there is a by-product if we pray with the spirit and with understanding. And the by-product is our brothers and sisters will be edified. Now, isn't that marvellous? Sometimes we think that only teaching or ministering, ministering the Word will edify the Church.

But remember, prayer will edify the Church. Now, teaching or ministering the Word is towards our brothers and sisters. And it comes from God certainly.

It should edify, build up our brothers and sisters with the Word of Grace. But praying is unto God. And yet you find as we pray to God, our brothers and sisters are edified or built up.

In what way? In the way that they realize that the same Spirit of God is moving upon the hearts of His people. In the way that sometimes you have a burden, but you do not have the Word to discharge the burden, and the Lord use your brother and sister to utter it. That edifies you.

And also, as your brother and sister is praying, and you really join yourself with them in one, then you'll find we are really built up together in love. So that's the by-product of a prayer meeting. A prayer meeting should build up God's people.

Now, do not go away from prayer meeting and complain and say, well, the prayer is very poor, and it's almost mechanical and formal. Well, if it is mechanical, formal, it won't edify. That's true.

But if we are really praying with the Spirit and with understanding, it ought to edify every one of us, to build us up. That's the reason why you'll find a psalmist said in Psalm 19. I believe you all know this.

Psalm 19 verse 14. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah, my Rock and my Redeemer. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart.

Not only pray with the Spirit, that is the meditation of my heart, but also pray with understanding, which results in the words of my mouth. Both are important. Be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Sometimes, you know, when we pray together, well, when I was in Florida, one brother asked me this question. When we are praying together, can I say, I pray, I say, I ask? Or it should be always we say, we pray, we ask. Now, technically, we will say, when we pray together, it should be we, because we are praying together.

You are not praying alone. But sometimes you can say, I pray, I ask. But when you say that, remember, you are saying it in a representative way.

Not just saying it as an individual. You are not praying your private individual prayer. You are praying on behalf of all the brothers and sisters.

So may the Lord help us when we pray together.

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