



## Week Five Prayer Focus – Jesus’ Purpose, and Holy Spirit Power!

Ask the Father to help Belmont remember we are destined to do the works that Jesus did and even greater works, and pray He will give us His faith for this and His expectation that this is normal expression our life in Messiah; pray that our Father’s Kingdom will come through us doing the works that Jesus did, in partnership with the Father, and in the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit.

### Jesus’ Purpose – His Father’s Kingdom

When His followers asked Him to teach them to prayer, the LORD Jesus began, “Our Father in heaven, may Your Name be kept holy; cause Your Kingdom to come, cause Your will to be done here on earth just as it is in heaven.” We know Jesus’ purpose was to recover the Kingdom usurped by satan, and give it all back to His Father as an expression of obedient love. While the ultimate victory is finished in the cross, there is the practical outworking of this Kingdom coming into the earth. As the word of God tells us, Jesus sits at His Father’s right hand until all His enemies are brought under His feet (Psalm 110:1-2). Yet during His life on earth, what did this look like? Peter explains in sharing the good news for the first time to those who were not Jewish: “How that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him.” The link between the Father’s Kingdom coming and the day-to-day ministry of Jesus is simply doing good and healing those dominated by satan – in the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit.

In John 20 the Lord Jesus tells His disciples, “Just as the father sent me, I myself am also sending you.” Then He breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” I wonder whether they could possibly grasp what He was meaning. They had indeed gone out in Jesus’ power and authority during His ministry before the cross, healing every kind of disease and marveling that demons submitted to them in Jesus’ name. What, must they have wondered, could Jesus possibly mean to add the gift of the Holy Spirit? For us today, who have the record of Jesus’ life and the miraculous exploits of His first followers, how entrenched we can still become in sinful unbelief at the prospect of healing the sick, cleansing the leper, casting out demons or raising the dead!? And Jesus promises something even more outrageous – we can do even greater works than these! He is sending us to do what He did – the same way He did it! We **rest** in the Father’s presence with us. We **pray** for the Father’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven – this is His Kingdom! And we **do** His will by our Holy Spirit-powered good actions and by healing people oppressed by the devil. This is how we can “re-present” Jesus to the world and demonstrate what it is to be a people who carry with us the presence of the Living God who is Love!

## **Conversation Starters with Jesus**

How are you doing resting in the presence of our Heavenly Father and believing that anything is possible for you because He is with you?

If the way we live is a testimony of what we truly believe, what do your actions and choices declare about your confidence in Jesus and His good news?

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what it would look like for you to do the works Jesus did and greater in your current day-to-day life? How can you begin by doing good to those in your circle of influence?

## **Confidence in Prayer**

I think anyone who is walking with the Lord Jesus can have times when they wonder whether their prayers are making any difference. We can often approach God with our wants (which we are invited to do, see Philippians 4:6), perhaps subconsciously expecting the lightning speed, quick answers we've become accustomed to in our Google searches or Amazon same-day orders. Then when our eyes don't see what we think an answer should look like, we can become dull in our willingness to ask and keep on asking until the answer is given to us, to seek and keep on seeking until we find, or to knock and keep on knocking until the door is opened to us. So maybe the first place we need to come in prayer is to step up to the battle in our minds to remember that Jesus says our Father is always working, His ears are always open, His eyes are always on us, and when we set our hearts on Him He sends His answers, even the moment we begin to pray!

A related battle may be in our tendency to try to figure out ourselves the perfect way to pray. This may water down our prayers and detract from their primary purpose, which is simply to cultivate our vital, growing, uninterrupted relationship with the Living God. Look at the way King David, a man after God's heart prays in the Psalms. He is unplugged, unpolished, edgy, angry, depressed, frustrated, weary, and honest with the Lord. He does not hide or try to clean up His emotions or thoughts, because He is aware that the LORD knows them all before he can even form a flickering awareness about them in his own mind. He cries for justice, vindication and victory over his enemies. He cries out for more of the Living God, His presence, His power, His promises, and His blessings. He declares the truths He has learned of God's character and loving provision like a weapon. This is part of our warfare and victory – to know the word and ways of God and fight to keep our thoughts in line with that – only (2 Corinthians 10:3-6). As we grow in knowing God's will through His word and prayer, we grow in our confidence in approaching Him. John boldly and simply declares this assurance: If we ask anything in line with God's will, then we can be certain that He hears us. And if we know that our Father God hears us, we know that we have the thing that we ask of Him. (1 John 5:14-15.)

## **Conversation Starters with Jesus**

*Is there a situation you have been praying about but without being confident you know the will of God that, if you prayer it, will bring confidence and His sure answers?*

*Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the places you need to grow in knowing God, and for that increasing knowledge to empower you to new depths of honesty, power, and perseverance in your prayers.*

*Our weapons for warfare include the sword of the Holy Spirit, which is the Word of God, and prayer, also in the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:17-18). How are you doing with knowing the scripture and the prayers that the Holy Spirit needs to wield to bring about Jesus' victory for you and through you?*