

## Prayer: Study #4

I Thessalonians 5:17

Greetings once again in the name of our Lord. It's a joy once again to be able to come to you and share with you the Word of God. Today, we want to continue our study on the subject of supernatural contact, and that's prayer. Now, in Jeremiah 23:29, the Bible says, *Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer [that] breaketh the rock in pieces?* Today, our subject is going to be the Word.

Jeremiah was a prophet of God, and he said that the Word was like a fire, and later on, Jeremiah would make a statement, and it's hard to understand. He was a preacher. He was a man of God. And he got to a point in his life, he says, "I'm not going to preach anymore. I'm just going to quit." But then he makes a statement. He says the Word of God is like a fire within him and he could not contain himself. He had to proclaim the Word of God. And that's the way it should be in our lives today, a saved people who know Jesus as our Savior, the prayer that we pray, the prayer going to the Lord in prayer, speaking to our Heavenly Father should be like a fire within us, and the Word of God should be like a fire burning within us.

Well, up to this point, we've studied three steps in prayer, that first step, of course, being praise. In Psalm 150 and verse 1, it says, *Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.* The second aspect of our prayer should be confession. In I John 1:9, the Bible says, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Psalm 66:18 says, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*

Well, the third step in our prayer life should be waiting, and that is soul surrender. In Psalm

27:14, the Bible says, *Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.* And then in John 15:5, we see soul surrender. We are waiting, and we surrender ourselves to the Lord in prayer. John 15:5 says, *I am the vine, ye are the branches....* This is Jesus speaking.... *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit....listen to this now....for without me ye can do nothing.* When we get to the point in our lives we realize that we can do nothing on our own, that it's all through the Lord Jesus Christ, then God can use us.

Well, now we come to our fourth step in supernatural contact, prayer. The fourth step is Scripture praying, the Word. In Psalm 119:105, it says, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* When you pray, you are speaking to God. In Psalm 4:1, it says, *Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.* Psalm 143:1 says, *Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.* Prayer is speaking directly to God our father.

And then we see that, when we read God's Word, God is speaking to us. In Luke 24:32, it says: *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?* This, of course, is speaking of those disciples on the road to Emmaus as just following the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, and these two were walking along and they were conversing and the Lord appeared to them. And they didn't know who he was and they started questioning Him. They said, "Haven't you heard

what happened?" And then after they conversed for a while, Jesus started speaking to them, and then they suddenly realized something was different about this person. It was the Lord, and they said, *Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us....while he opened to us the scriptures?*

And that's the way it is when we look at the Word of God. God is speaking to us. Our hearts burn within us as we study the Word, as we read the Word, as we go to Him in prayer and we look at the Word. We read the Word, and that is part or should be part of our prayer life.

First of all, we see that we open the Bible. We ask God to bless the reading of His Word. We ask Him for concentration, for understanding. In Luke 11:1, it says, *And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.* And, of course, you know the very familiar Scripture that says, you know, they wanted to learn how to pray in Matthew 6; it talks about this, as well. And it says that Jesus told them to pray in this manner: *Our Father which art in heaven....*

And, of course, we know that we ask Jesus into our heart and God becomes our Heavenly Father once we've trusted Jesus as our Savior. Revelation 1:3, it says, *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.* Now, these words were written, penned down, by John, but they were written down under the inspiration of God, by the inspiration of God. And I believe that this verse in Revelation 1:3 is not only written for the prophecy of the Book of Revelation, but it could be summed up and said that it was written for the whole Bible, that *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words....* In other words, we have a blessing coming to us when we read the Word of God.

And then we see that Bible reading is for preparation in prayer. In II Chronicles chapter 12 and verse 14, it says, *And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD.* John 15:3 says, *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* Something about the Word of God when we get into it that God speaks to us through His Word. Now remember, we speak to God in prayer. God speaks to us through His Word. And oftentimes, things creep into our lives that shouldn't be there. Well, the Word of God is quick and powerful. It's like a cleansing power when we go to it and the Holy Spirit convicts us of something in our lives that shouldn't be there, and we say, "Oh, God, forgive me." And remember, one of our steps in prayer is asking God's forgiveness. And we need to be in prayer, seeking God's face, and in His Word and become clean. Get clean through His Word as a Christian.

And then Bible reading. This portion of Bible reading that I'm talking about today is not for the preparing to teach or to preach to others. It's for you. It's for me. It's personal. Psalm 19, verse 7-8 says, *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure....* listen to this now.... *enlightening the eyes.* That means it opens our eyes. It's personal to me. It speaks to me. It speaks to you as you get into the Word of God.

In Acts chapter 8, verses 26-38, you can read that later on if you would, the couple of verses that I want to call to your attention. Verse 28 says that this person was returning; this was Philip. He was returning and he was on the road, and there was a man who was returning. He was an Ethiopian, and it says, <sup>28</sup>*[This Ethiopian] was returning, and sitting in his chariot reading Isaiah the prophet.* <sup>29</sup>*Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.* And then in verse 35,

the Bible says, *Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture.... the same Scripture where this eunuch was reading... and Philip preached unto him Jesus.*

Well, as we read the Word of God, the Word of God speaks to our heart, and that's what Philip was doing with this Ethiopian. He was reading or he was giving the Word of God to this Ethiopian eunuch, and the eyes of this Ethiopian were opened. And that's what happens to us when we read the Word of God. Not to prepare to teach or to preach to others, but to let God speak to our heart personally, and I believe that our eyes will be opened and He will let us see things from the Word of God that we need to see as we go to Him in prayer.

Well, how has God spoken in the past? And how does He speak in the present? Well, the Bible tells us that, in times past, God spoke audibly. In Genesis chapter 17, verses 1-4, it says, <sup>1</sup>*And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.* <sup>2</sup>*And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.* <sup>3</sup>*And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,* <sup>4</sup>*As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.*

Many other verses speak about this, how that God spoke audibly in the past. Genesis 35:13 talks about this; Genesis 17:22 also mentions this. But notice here, Ephesians 3:5 says, *Which in other ages.... that's times past.... was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed....* this is the things of God, the voice of God, it was made known in the past by audibly speaking.... *As is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.* God in the present speaks through His Word.

In Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1 and 2, it says, <sup>1</sup>*God, who at sundry times....* this is times past...

*and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,* <sup>2</sup>*Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*

Now the Bible tells us in the Book of John that the Word was God and the world was created by God and Jesus was this Word and the Word became flesh. This is Jesus. And then as we study and understand what the Word says, we understand that the Word *is* Jesus and that Jesus speaks to us through the Bible, and that He is speaking to us not in an audible voice but through the Spirit of God through His Word, the Bible.

Well, how do we understand the Word of God? I believe that we understand the Word of God, as a saved person, by and through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals the Word of God to us. In Ephesians chapter 3, verses 4 and 5, it says, <sup>4</sup>*Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ....* We understand by reading the Word of God. In John 16:13, it says, *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.* God speaks to us through His Word.

Are you saved today? Do you know Jesus as your Savior? Why not bow your head right now and ask Him to come into your heart that you, too, can go to the Lord in prayer.

It's been good being with you today. Let me encourage you to look at our website, [www.LRWM.org](http://www.LRWM.org). Or you can write me today, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731. Until this same time when you will tune in once again, may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.