



The Holy Spirit and Spirituality 1Q 2017 Lesson 10 The Holy Spirit, the Word, and Prayer

Kent Johnson an online listener emailed this EGW quote this week:

Satan deceives and corrupts the world and makes men believe that they are sinless and holy while sinning against God, [how? what would Satan need to do to get people to actively sin, but to think they are holy with God?] but in so doing he is only carrying on his original work. He has introduced no new arguments, he has created no new empire of darkness from which to draw supplies for the furtherance of his deceptions.[what does this mean? it is the same issue he raised in heaven and deceived 1/3 of the angels—which was?] And sin that was sin in the beginning is sin today; and sin, the apostle declares, is the transgression of God’s law. [what law? How could Satan get people to transgress God’s law while they think they are holy and sinless?] In these days it is **Satan’s determined purpose to intensify sin by making it legal in the children of disobedience. He is to reveal to the world and to heaven what is the order and result of a government carried on according to his ideas of administration and law.** [what is Satan doing? Making sin into a legal problem, a legal issue, thus righteousness becomes about being legally right, so people can keep on living out of harmony with God’s design but believe they are holy because they have legal payment or keep the legal rules, like the right day of worship.] He is working with secret yet with intense zeal in both Church and State, to cause men to throw off all the restraints of God’s law, and take a decided stand with him in the ranks of rebellion; but when his work is accomplished, the Lord will interpose, and vindicate his honor as the supreme Ruler of the universe. {ST April 28, 1890, par. 8}

Incredible insight here—this is exactly Satan’s attack, the legal view, not design law, but imposed law. Thus people do things that are “legal” but actually violations of God’s law.

Any examples of legal violations of God’s law?

- Jesus healing on Sabbath and Pharisees wanting to stone Him. The Pharisees were keeping the legal religion, thinking they were holy, but in actuality were intensifying their sin
- Eating a vegan diet while holding condemnation in the heart toward those who do not—judging them.
- Claiming legal security in salvation by the legal application of the blood of Jesus and being declared righteous by God, but not experiencing an actual change of heart—having the law written on the heart and mind

SABBATH

Read Memory Text: “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. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. (Rom 8:26,27, NKJV)

With whom does the Spirit intercede? For what purpose is the Spirit interceding?

- What is the function, action, of the Spirit?
- Is the Spirit working to inform and educate God, or inform and educate us?
- Is the Spirit working to convict God or convict us?
- Is the Spirit working to influence God or influence us?
- Is the Spirit our representative to God or Christ's representative to us?
- Is the Spirit to take what Christ achieved and reproduce it in God or to reproduce it in us?
- Is the Spirit a translator who translates our thoughts to the Father so the Father can understand them otherwise the Father would have no idea what we are trying to say? Or is the Spirit working to enlighten us about God and God's purposes for our lives?
- Is the Spirit working to penetrate the dark cloud of misunderstanding in the mind of God, or in our minds?

The point: where is the Spirit interceding—in heaven with God, or in our hearts and minds?

To make the point even more clearly our memory text is Romans 8:26,27, listen to what Paul says just a few verses later—and we are focusing on the question of intercession vs. 31-34:

What, then, shall we say in response to this? **If God is for us**, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—**how will he** not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom **God has chosen**? It is **God who justifies**. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of **God and is also interceding for us**. ¹

What is being said here? Who is interceding for us in Romans 8?

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit! Any idea that one member of the Godhead is interceding with another member of the Godhead is not what the Bible is teaching.

If they are all interceding for us—what are they doing? What is the intercession?

God—Father, Son, Holy Spirit intercede in three places:

- In our hearts and minds interceding with us, against our natural desires, against the carnal nature. Gen 3, “I will put enmity between you and the woman” speaking to the serpent. The fact we have a longing for good and are not totally corrupt in selfishness is evidence of the intercession of God—the working of the Spirit in our hearts.
- God intercedes with the powers of darkness, holding at bay evil forces, limiting them from total destruction of all that is good.

¹ *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. (1984). (Ro 8:31–34). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.



- God interceded through Christ with the natural outcome of what Adam's sin would result in—eternal death for the human species. Christ altered the outcome, by becoming sin though he knew no sin so that we might become the righteousness of God!

The Spirit is not working to help God with better insight, better understanding, better organization of His thoughts, better realization of His duty, better desire for good, more love, less anger etc. The Spirit is working in us to help us out of the miasma of sin!

Read first paragraph, “True spirituality and prayer go together...” Do we agree that prayer is essential for developing true spirituality, i.e. experiencing God's healing of our hearts and minds? Absolutely!

Then does that mean that practicing vigorous prayer **means** one has true spirituality? Why or why not?

Can one practice vigorous prayer and be hardened against God or develop a false spirituality?

Were the 450 prophets of Baal, whom Elijah confronted at Mt. Carmel, practicing vigorous prayer? Were they developing true spirituality?

Does it matter to whom one prays?

What do you think of this quotation from the book *The Great Controversy*:

In rejecting the truth, men reject its Author. **In trampling upon the law of God, they deny the authority of the Law-giver.** [what law? would replacing design law with human imposed law be trampling upon the law of God?] **It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone. By misrepresenting the attributes of God, Satan leads men to conceive of Him in a false character.** With many, a **philosophical idol is enthroned** in the place of Jehovah; while the living God, as He is revealed in **His word, in Christ, and in the works of creation**, is worshiped by but few. Thousands deify nature while they deny the God of nature. **Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today** as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah. **The god of many** professedly wise men, of philosophers, poets, politicians, journalists--the god of polished fashionable circles, of many colleges and universities, even of some theological institutions--**is little better than Baal**, the sun-god of Phoenicia. {GC 583.1}

What if one has vigorous prayer to a god possessing the attributes of Satan? Will such prayer help their spirituality?

Prayer is essential, but what is more essential is that one is praying to the true God and not to a false god concept made in Satan's image, which is what much of the modern world does—including within Christianity.



The last paragraph states, “We should not be basing our spiritual life on our unsteady experience and subjective feelings, nor focusing our prayers on suspect contemplative and meditative practices.”

What are they saying?

Are they saying we should not pray when emotional? Or that we should not allow emotions to be the *answers* to our prayers?

Further, are they suggesting we should not take worldly methods of prayer and use those in place of Biblical methods?

What are Biblical methods of prayer?

First and foremost, Bible prayer starts with an actual knowledge of God, if one doesn't know God one cannot have genuine heart to heart communication with God.

So, the root to it all is coming back to a knowledge of God, which enlightens us to His character, methods and principles. When this happens so many ideas are clarified. For instance, what kind of a God would:

- want repetitive mantras that shut down thinking?
 - Would a God of truth want people to limit their growth in truth? Would it be a god that has no truth?
- want followers to empty their minds and not actually have an interpersonal interaction with Him?
 - Would it be a god that, if we got to know we would not like and not trust?
- require prayer to him in order to influence him to be merciful?
 - Would it be a god that had good and love in their heart, or one who did not?
- have prayer be a form, a ritual, a legal checkbox activity that one is required to do in order to get blessed?
 - Would it be a god concerned about the actual condition of his children, or one more concerned with upholding his rules?

But what kind of God would have prayer function as communication between God and humans to open the human mind and heart to the presence of God, in order to heal, restore, recreate, enlighten and renew the created being back to God's ideal? Why?

How does love function? Can love be forced, coerced, commanded, achieved by edict, directive, hierarchical command? No! Love is only achieved by the free exercise of the individual—thus prayer, actually talking with God, is part of God's design for free beings to freely choose to enter into a relationship with God for their growth.



SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “Even though clothed...” What is the motive in each of the examples given?

Could one pray for all those things with healthy motives? What does this tell us? What lessons do we learn? Man looks on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart!

Read third paragraph, “Prayer does not change God...” Yes, I think we all agree that the character of God does not change based on our prayers, and our prayers open us to God which is part of the process of changing us back into unity with Him.

However, even though our prayers don’t change God—does God ever change what He states He wants based on our prayers? In other words, if we pray long enough can we get God to agree to do what we want?

What about:

- The quail in the wilderness?
- Kings to rule over Israel?
- Fighting to conquer the promised land?
- Balaam and his request to curse Israel?

Can we persist so long in prayer asking for things God does not want us to experience that God finally says—okay? Why does God say okay—even help us to what He said He didn’t want us to do? Is it because God wants us to experience it or because we insist and will only learn by suffering the results of going against what God has said and if God is helping us it limits our ability to blame God for the problem—and God wants us to learn?

Consider this quotation:

Men and women, in the face of the most positive commands of God, will follow their own inclination, and then dare to pray over the matter, to prevail upon God to consent to allow them to go contrary to his expressed will. God is not pleased with such prayers. Satan comes to their side, as he did to Eve in Eden, and impresses them, and they have an exercise of mind, and this they relate as a most wonderful experience which the Lord has given them. A true experience will be in perfect harmony with natural and divine law. False experience will array itself against science and the principles of Jehovah. The religious world is covered with a pall of moral darkness. Superstition and bigotry control the minds of men and women, and blind their judgment, so that they do not discern their duty to their fellow-men, and their duty to yield unquestioned obedience to the will of God. {RH, July 27, 1886 par. 5}

Balaam inquired of God if he might curse Israel, because in so doing he had the promise of great reward. God said, Ye shall not go; but he was urged by the messengers, and greater



inducements were presented. Balaam had been shown the will of the Lord in this matter, but he was so eager for the reward that he ventured to ask God the second time. The Lord permitted Balaam to go. Then he had a wonderful experience; but who would wish to be guided by such an experience as that of Balaam? There are those who would understand their duty clearly if their duty was in harmony with their natural inclinations. Circumstances and reason may indicate clearly their duty, but when against their natural inclination, these evidences are frequently set aside. Then these persons will presume to go to God to learn their duty. But God will not be trifled with. He will permit such persons to follow the desires of their own hearts. Psalms 81:11, 12: "But my people would not hearken to my voice; . . . So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels." {RH, July 27, 1886 par. 6}

Those who are desirous to follow a course which pleases their fancy, are in danger of being left to follow their own inclinations, supposing them to be the leadings of God's Spirit. Some have their duty indicated by circumstances and facts sufficiently clear, but have, through the solicitations of friends, **in harmony with their own inclinations**, been swerved from the path of duty, and passed over the **clear evidences in the case**; and, with apparent conscientiousness, **they have prayed long and earnestly for light. They have had earnest feeling in the matter, and they interpret this to be the Spirit of God. But they have been deceived.** This course has grieved the Spirit of God. **They had light, and in the very reason of things, should have understood their duty**; but a few pleasing inducements balance their minds in the wrong direction, and they urge these before the Lord, and press their case, and **the Lord allows them to have their own way. They have so strong an inclination to follow their own course that God permits them to do so, and to suffer the results. These imagine they have a wonderful experience.** {RH, July 27, 1886 par. 7}

What is transpiring? Why does God allow them to have their own way? Why doesn't God use power to stop them? What would happen if God did? What is the only way for God to save people and have them be the same individuals with their identities still intact?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, "Asking reveals our..." Does the act of asking God mean we trust Him? Or do many ask who do not trust God?

Did the legion of demons ask Jesus to go into the swine? Did that mean they trusted God?

If God knows everything already, and already knows all of our needs, why do we need to ask? Is there something we need we cannot receive without asking? What and why?

Can we receive a new way of thinking, a new heart, a new mind without asking? Why not? Because to change our hearts require our voluntary participation if we as individuals are to remain. God has the power to overwrite us and instill perfect sinlessness into our brain circuits, but to do so would create



programmed robots and our individuality would be destroyed. The only way for our unique selves to be retained is by our willing, voluntary participation, choosing freely with our wills to agree and accept God and His methods into our hearts, minds, lives and practices. Thus we must ask God to come into our hearts, ask Him to teach us the truth etc.

God can provide many things without our asking—like the sunshine and the rain, which Jesus said is a blessing to the righteous and the wicked, but **God cannot transform the heart without the willing consent and active participation of the sinner.**

Read second paragraph, “We truly can ask God for anything...” What about asking God to kill someone, or help you kill someone?

Did Joshua ask God to hold the sun still, to give more time to kill? Did God do it? hmmm... why? Does God like killing? Why did He do it?

What was God’s plan? God would send the hornet and pestilence ahead of Israel and little by little the people would abandon the land and Israel would over the generations slowly take it over without any fighting and no conflict. If that would have happened we wouldn’t have all the fighting still ongoing today.

Who were the ones that were being killed by Israel? Were they following the Spirit of God? If they were what would have happened? Do we have any examples? Yes, Rahab—she was open to the Spirit of God and what happened? What if the entire city responded like Rahab?

Why didn’t they? Because their hearts were aligned with Satan and what was Satan influencing these humans to do? To oppose the plan of salvation, to destroy the avenue through which the Messiah would come. If you lived during the time of the Black Death, bubonic plague where hundreds of millions were dying, and you and your entire family were infected and dying, and you knew there was a remedy to save all who partook, but someone was actively working to prevent the remedy from being delivered, what would you do?

God had a plan to prevent these evil nations from closing the avenue for the Messiah, the pestilence and hornet however, Israel didn’t trust God to follow His plan. They wanted to use the weapons of the world. They wanted to show their strength, they wanted to take revenge and kill.

So, God said, “If you are going to do this, then I want the least amount of killing, the least amount of suffering, the least amount of people scarred by war, suffering with PTSD.” So, do it in one generation, let only one generation of humans experience war and killing, so wipe them all out, leave no one, and then not only will the least number of humans be killed, but the war will stop and we will not have perpetual generations scarred by war. Also, when possible, those who would join and be united in heart with you, don’t kill them accept them into fellowship.”



What about the idea of claiming every promise of the Bible? What does this mean?

Does it mean that God is like a great vending machine, and the promises are the coin to activate it. What we need is to find the right Bible promise, recite the right quotation, claim the correct promise and then God is obliged to give us what He has promised?

How many approach Bible promises like this? And when they do and they don't get what they are claiming, what happens? They lose faith in God, or feel they are not righteous enough, or their faith is not strong enough etc.

Read last paragraph, "Yet, there are some conditions..." Does the statement "All God's gifts are promised on the condition of obedience" mean the same thing as "if we pray selfishly God will not answer our prayers"?

Is it possible, likely even, that if we pray selfishly God may answer our prayer, but we will **not** be able to receive God's gifts?

Do you see the difference?

- Did Israel pray selfishly when they prayed for quail? Did God answer their prayer? Yes—did they receive God's gift? No, they refused the gift of manna, and because they chose the quail many lost the gift of life.
- Did Israel pray for kings? Did God answer their prayer and choose their first two? Did they receive God's gift? No, they lost the gift of God leading them directly, and further lost their wealth in taxes, their sons in military service and their daughters in harems, and eventually lost their freedom as they were conquered by other nations.

Why does God answer such prayers? What is the alternative? God wants to stay connected, to stay in relationship, because God wants to lead rebellious children back to His ideal. Sometimes when rebellion gets to such a point that God must choose to either cut all ties or go along with them. Sometimes God has chosen to go along allowing people to experience what He warned them against, but He does not abandon them. He stays close to heal and restore all who learn and turn to Him.

Consider Ester and Mordecai—where did God command the Israelites to be? Back in Israel, to return home and rebuild the temple. But these people did not obey, they stayed in Persia—and did God abandon them?

Now we don't know all the reasons why they didn't return to Jerusalem, only that they didn't. Perhaps they had elderly relatives or friends that were too feeble to make the journey and they stayed to care for them. Regardless, they weren't where God instructed the Israelites to be and God stayed with them and helped them.



TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Asking alone is not enough...” The lesson states, “we have to believe that He will do what is best for us in His time.” If we don’t believe this does that mean God won’t do what is best for us?

Or, does God always do what He determines is best, whether we understand it or not? But does our asking open up avenues for God to work which might not be available if we don’t ask? Why?

What is God working to accomplish? Healing of the hearts and minds of people, our asking opens our minds to His working in ways that are not opened when we don’t ask. Further, our prayers open opportunities for God to act in accordance with the freewill principles of His government without abusing power, without being dictatorial, in interceding in the lives of others.

The lesson asks us to read James 1:6-8:

But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. (NIV)

But when you ask, ask with the sure and confident knowledge that he longs to give you what you ask: do not waver back and forth in fear and uncertainty like a fishing bobber tossed about on ocean waves, for your fear will obstruct your ability to receive what he longs to give you. ⁷ Those consumed by fear will not think they can receive anything from the Lord: ⁸ they are unstable, controlled by emotions, and can't make up their minds about anything. (Remedy)

read third paragraph, “In the Bible...” Faith is trusting and trusting is only safe when trust is placed someone trustworthy—so what is the key to faith or trust? Coming to know God, this is life eternal that they might know you the only true God. John 17:3

What causes us to doubt? Is it not the lies and distortions about God that we believe? The primary one, the root lie of all, is that God’s law functions like imposed human law—this lie is the root to the entire Great Controversy and sadly, it is still being promulgated in the church today!

Did you notice the last portion of the paragraph, where it says “Faith knows that for God nothing is impossible.” But just before it said, “Faith knows that ‘it is impossible for God to lie.’”

Are some things impossible for God? Yes, there are some things impossible for God—like what?

- For God to lie
- For God to be selfish
- For God to fail to love



- For God to be the source of evil
- For God to be the source of death
- For God to be untrustworthy
- For God to save a person against their will
- For God to violate His own character, methods and principles

Do you agree? I have misstated anything here?

WEDNESDAY

read second paragraph, “The third aspect of Bible prayer is reception...” What does it mean to receive it? What are we to receive? Is it more than receiving an idea? What?

The third paragraph states, “As God’s children we are to live on God’s promises, not on His explanations.” thoughts?

What is this suggesting? Is it suggesting that God doesn’t explain things? Is it suggesting that God doesn’t want us to understanding or ask questions? Is it suggesting we don't think?

What about Isaiah 1:18—come let us reason together...

What about God telling Abraham He was going to destroy Sodom—could this be considered a “promise”? Should Abraham have just said okay?

What did Jesus tell His disciples in John 15:15?

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. NIV

Has God been seeking to explain Himself, His kingdom, His methods, His purposes, His actions to His intelligent creatures for all eternity?

Then why suggest we don’t go on explanations if God is explaining Himself?

Because of imposed law—imposed laws often don’t have reasons, it is obey because the one in charge said so. But design law is how life is built to function and the Designer wants intelligent obedience, which requires we understand.

What do you think of this quotation?

"All whom God has blessed with reasoning powers are to become intellectual Christians. They are not requested to believe without evidence; therefore Jesus has enjoined upon all to



search the Scriptures. Let the ingenious inquirer, and the one who would know for himself what is truth, **exert his mental powers to search out the truth** as it is in Jesus. Any neglect here is at the peril of the soul. We must know individually the prescribed conditions of entering into eternal life. . . . We cannot allow these questions to be settled for us by another's mind, or another's judgment. . . . We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle traditions, to human authorities, or to pretensions. . . . **The Lord positively demands of every Christian an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures.**" *Review and Herald*, March 8, 1887 (2RH 117:1:1 - 2:0); *The Medical Missionary*, May 1, 1892

or this quote:

"Teachers should lead students to think, and clearly to understand the truth for themselves. It is not enough for the teacher to explain or for the student to believe; inquiry must be awakened, and **the student must be drawn out to state the truth in his own language, thus making it evident that he sees its force and makes the application.** By painstaking effort the vital truths should thus be impressed upon the mind. This may be a slow process; but it is of more value than rushing over important subjects without due consideration." *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 154 (1900); cf. *CT* 434; *IMCP* 365

Does such understanding mean there are explanations being given? And who is the source of all truth and the explainer of all truth?

Now to be sure, God doesn't explain Himself to us in the sense of accountability or seeking permission, like a child explaining their actions to a parent. But God explains to us the truths about His character, nature, kingdom, principles, methods, purposes and how He has built reality to work—in love.

What is the primary limiting factor in God explaining things to us? Our capacity and readiness to comprehend!

THURSDAY

Praying for the Holy Spirit—what does this mean? What does it look like? When the Holy Spirit is received what is the evidence?

Truth and love manifested in a character like Christ!

FRIDAY

Discuss questions 2 and 3



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

We need HELP! With what? Well, after 10 years of ministry, this website has collected a huge number of articles, blogs, videos, podcasts, and notes that need to be categorized and indexed, so YOU can easily find all that's been said on a particular topic. The problem is, we don't have hundreds of eyes and ears on staff to search, read, listen, and find all these nuggets of truth. So, Come And Reason is calling on you, our faithful supporters, to help us with this task.

What do we need from you? Easy. Whenever you come across an article, blog, video, audio, or note that talks about a specific topic (like wrath, punishment, sanctuary, temple, mind, character, sin, death, etc., etc.), simply go to About > Contact Us and send us a note telling us where you found the information (page # in a document/note, time index in a video or audio file, the exact web address where you found the material, and the TOPIC the citation is talking about). We'll take those TOPICS and arrange them into categories and build a new menu entry to index all these resources.

Thank you, all, ahead of time for your participation and help in this rather significant endeavor!

Calendar: Come and Reason now has a Calendar of Events on our Website. If you would like to know what is coming up or where Dr. J is speaking or who is teaching a particular week, check out the calendar.

April 27-29: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC Event The Struggle Is Real at the Thomas Road Baptist Church at Liberty University at Lynchburg, VA. For more info visit <http://lynchburg.cmhcsummit.com/>

May 6, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Summit Northwest Ministries, Post Falls, Idaho: for more info visit: <http://www.summitnorthwest.org/>

June 8-10, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC Event The Struggle is Real in Naperville, IL.

AUGUST 1, 2017: Dr. Jennings' new book *The God-Shaped Heart* will be released by Baker Books. Here is a brief description:

Love is more than emotion, more than compassion, more than positive regard for another; love is power—the power to live, heal and be free. Love is functional, operational, with specific design parameters built into the fabric of reality. Love is intelligent and as we intelligently choose to harmonize with how love functions we not only experience greater health, fulfillment and wellbeing, we are transformed to become forces for good in the world. In *The God-Shaped Heart* Christian psychiatrist Dr. Tim Jennings explores the healing power of love, exposes a belief system infecting Christianity that obstructs love, and identifies eternal truths that open the heart to God's transforming power of love.

September 15,16 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Church in the Valley, Aldergrove, British Columbia, Canada.

October 12-16, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Garden Grove SDA church in Garden Grove, CA. This will be a multi-speaker event focusing on the atonement. For more information contact:

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October 27, 28, 2017: Dr. Jennings will speaking at the Arlington SDA church in Arlington, TX. For more information contact: <http://www.arlingtonadventist.com/>